

E-learning, Social Media and Apprenticeship

Learning at Work in a Grocery Store

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Abstract

In this thesis I have explored how learning takes place in a grocery store. Based on a previous research of the E-learning program in a Norwegian supermarket chain, I aimed to do a further research in one of the supermarkets. The merchant in this supermarket had created a Facebook group in order to share information with his employees. I was curious about how that Facebook group could mediate learning in the supermarket. My research questions aimed to explore how training is organized, how informal learning takes place, and how knowledge is facilitated and by what means. I conducted a virtual ethnography of the Facebook group, and qualitative interviews with the merchant and three employees.

The data indicates that apprenticeship learning is preferred as training method rather than conventional E-learning. The E-learning courses provided by the supermarket chain facilitate instruction and content delivery, and can relate to Web 1.0 technologies. Apprenticeship learning, on the other hand, facilitates social interaction and learning by doing, and can relate to Web 2.0. Another finding indicates that the Facebook group in the supermarket is a platform for information delivery rather than discussion, and is therefore used as a Web 1.0 tool rather than a Web 2.0 tool. In addition to the Facebook group, the workers in the supermarket use pocket notes in order to remember work routines and tasks. These notes might function as reminders for knowledge available in the world or as scaffolding for internalizing the knowledge in the head. Further, the informants make a clear distinction between information sharing and the Facebook group on the one side, and learning and training on the other. The Facebook group thus functions as a tool for living, while the E-learning courses and the apprenticeship learning function as tools for learning.

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1. Introduction

Learning and competence development have received much attention in working life over the past years, and E-learning at work appears to be a major trend. The development of World Wide Web in the mid 1990s increased the interest for E-learning considerably. Many workplaces started to implement LMSs and web-based information systems in order to share information across the organizations. The first generation of WWW was characterized by content delivery, one-way communication and a “one size fits all” strategy (here called Web 1.0). The lack of user participation and flexibility with this platform caused dissatisfaction and opposition, followed by several debates about the use and development of E-learning. Eventually a new generation of Web emerged, called Web 2.0. This type of Web focused on the interactive capabilities of the Internet, and the rise of social interaction gave birth to the concept of social media.

Since the beginning of the new century the use of Internet has increased considerably, and over the past five years social media have revolutionized interaction with information systems and E-learning applications. At the end of March 2012 Facebook measured 901 million monthly active users, and an average of 3.2 billion “Likes” and comments per day during the first quarter of 2012 (Facebook Newsroom). The Internet has become a natural part of our community and it is hard to imagine a life without it. Along with the massive use of Internet and social media, the knowledge society is constantly growing. We now have instant access to a wealth of information, and formal education is no longer the primary source for learning. We can search the Internet for all kinds of information much easier than we could with paper based catalogues and encyclopedia. Further, we can also share our knowledge, experiences and utterances on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram or any other social network site.

There is no doubt that social media are supporting learning processes in our private lives. An interesting question, on the other hand, is how social media can support learning in school and learning at work. Most of the research concerning these issues appears to involve the use of social media for students in higher education. There seems to be limited research concerning the use of social media in relation to learning at work. In this thesis I will therefore do a further investigation of this particular research field.

1.1 Background for the Thesis

In October 2011 I worked for a company that develops E-learning systems, software and customized courses for various business organizations. One of their customers was a Norwegian supermarket chain, which in this thesis will be called “the Company” or just “Company”. In a workshop with the customer it emerged that the use of the existing E-learning courses was lower than desired. I was asked to explore the causes for the low user activity. I carried out qualitative interviews with employees and merchants in 16 supermarkets spread around the eastern region of Norway. The findings indicated that the reasons for the low user activity concerned time and costs, and lack of information sharing. Simultaneously, I found that one of the merchants had created a Facebook group in order to share information with his employees. Based on the findings, I suggested, among other things, that Facebook might be a possible platform for sharing information about E-learning in the Company in addition to other work-related issues. However, at that stage these were claims that I did not have sufficient evidence to say more about than speculate, and they indicated areas for more research. I therefore decided to carry out an in-depth study in one of the supermarkets, from now on referred to as “the Supermarket” or just “Supermarket”, and the particular Facebook group.

1.2 Research Questions

Inspired by the potential of the Facebook group in the Supermarket, I became curious about social media as a mediator for learning at work. How is the Facebook group related to E-learning and other learning processes in the Supermarket? In order to explore these issues I raise the following research questions:

1. How is learning taking place in the Supermarket?
 - a. How is (management initiated) training organized?
 - b. How are informal (worker initiated) learning processes occurring?
 - c. How is knowledge facilitated and with what means?

1.3 Conceptual Distinctions

Before I present my study of learning at work, I want to clarify and distinguish some basic concepts that will be used in the thesis. I will start by defining *workplace learning* and *learning at work*, and then introduce the terms *informal* and *formal learning*. I will also describe the concept of *E-learning*. A description of social media will be presented later in the thesis.

1.3.1 Workplace Learning and Learning at Work

Høyrup and Ellström (2007) describe *workplace learning* as involving both the workplace as a learning arena in which formal and informal learning take place, and educational activities within and outside the workplace. According to Høyrup and Ellström, workplace learning is concerned with two goals. The first goal is competence development of the individual employee, while the other goal is organizational change and improvement, i.e. development of the workplace. The organizational and the individual aspects of workplace learning supplement each other. Organizational development may be a tool to achieve individual learning and vice versa.

Mørch and Skaanes (2010) provide a definition of *learning at work*, which differs from learning in educational institutions. Learning at work is driven by situational demands and the learning needs depend on the organizational and individual goals, and small (working) group needs. Hence, in addition to the individual and organizational aspects, they take into account collaboration and project work as part of learning. Furthermore, Mørch and Skaanes distinguish between *primary work* and *secondary work*. Primary work refers to the main tasks to be accomplished during work (what is described in a work description), while secondary work refers to work that focus on training and learning. Mørch and Skaanes claims that “*secondary work supports and augments primary work and comes to the foreground when complex work is analyzed in detail or is otherwise disrupted and becomes an object of reflection*” (Mørch & Skaanes 2010: 146). In other words, secondary work is no less important. It is needed to make sure that the primary work can be carried out.

1.3.2 Formal and Informal Learning

Høyrup and Ellström (2007) point out that workplace learning includes both formal and informal learning processes. Malcolm et. al (2003) investigated the meanings and uses of the terms *formal*, *informal* and *non-formal learning*. They claim that the uses and meanings of the terms depend on organizational, social, cultural, economic, historical and political contexts where learning takes place. In their analysis they focus on the inter-relationships between formal and informal learning, and propose attributes of formality and informality in four different aspects of learning. I will account for some of these attributes now. Informal learning can be described as “*open-ended, with few time restrictions, no specified curriculum, no pre-determined learning objectives, no external certification*” (Malcolm et. al 2003: 315). Formal learning is seen as the opposite of all these. Another distinction involves whether the learning is “*learner determined and initiated (informal)*” or whether the learning is “*designed to meet the externally determined needs of others with more power – a dominant teacher, an examination board, an employer, the government, etc. (formal)*” (Malcolm et. al 2003: 316).

For the sake of simplicity, I will in this thesis refer to formal learning as based on pre-determined learning objectives outlined by an employer or others with more power (e.g. management, competency or HR division of a company). Informal learning will be referred to as open-ended learning with no specified learning objectives, and often initiated and determined by the learner itself (i.e. the employees). Despite this clear distinction, however, I am aware that formal and informal aspects of learning are intertwined and depend on the specific learning context. I will take this into consideration in my analysis.

1.3.3 E-learning at work

Mørch (2013) distinguishes between three types of E-learning at work (ELW): *Conventional E-learning*, *Social Media* and *3D worlds*. Conventional E-learning includes customized programs based on specific learning objectives for the employees. The E-learning courses provided by the Company can be referred to as conventional. Social media may support internal and external communication as a part of the learning process in the workplace. 3D worlds appears to be a combination of conventional E-learning and social media, and imply realistic simulations of real life situations. When I use the term “E-learning” in this thesis, I

refer to conventional E-learning, which are customized web-based courses based on specific learning goals.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis starts with a brief introduction of the Company and the use of E-learning as part of the training. This chapter also includes descriptions of the particular E-learning courses and a brief summary of the findings from the pilot study mentioned before. Chapter three contains theoretical perspectives in social media and learning, which serve as a lens for how social media might support learning processes. Chapter four includes a more detailed description of my research questions in light of the theoretical perspectives. In chapter five I will account for my methodological approach and the methods I used in order to collect data. This chapter also includes some ethical considerations and a discussion of the quality of my research. Chapter six contains a presentation of my data and analysis, including extracts from the data material and my interpretations of the findings. In chapter seven I discuss my findings in light of my pilot study summed up in chapter two, and in light of the theoretical perspectives outlined in chapter three.

2. The Company

2.1 E-learning as part of the training

The Company is a multi-national supermarket chain using a franchise business model, which makes the merchants self-employed. The Human Resources department is responsible for organizing formal training for all the merchants and employees in the Company. The use of conventional (course-based) E-learning is a significant part of the basic training. According to the E-learning strategy, one of the main objectives is to have contemporary, effective tools available for the merchants at any time. The purpose is to ensure that all employees have sufficient basic knowledge and to be familiar with the organizational areas as well as building pride and loyalty to the company. The E-learning courses are meant to function as a supplement to the general training, which includes practical training at the work place as well as external training.

The E-learning program includes various types of courses. The courses cover the philosophy, history, culture and values of the organization, customer service and work routines as well as the function of specific systems such as the cash register, the betting system and the lottery system for empty bottles. *The introductory course* is the most comprehensive one and concerns the philosophy, history, culture and values of the organization. The course is based on the content from the staff manual, which is a physical introduction book for new employees. Appendix 2 shows two screen shots from this course. The first screen shot shows some of the guidelines for holding the supermarkets orderly and clean. The other includes some of the guidelines for providing customer service, and the assignment involves placing the words to the correct image. Another E-learning course presents the basic skills and routines of operating the cash register. The other courses cover the arrangement of groceries as well as how to handle specific systems in the supermarket. In general, the content in the courses is communicated by means of text, media, case and scenarios as well as assignments such as quiz or “drag-and-drop”, as showed in appendix 2. In order to start the E-learning modules, the employees log into a learning portal, either through the web site of the organization or directly through a Learning management system (LMS). The merchant must order username and password for each employee.

2.2 Results from the pilot study

As mentioned in the introduction, I was hired as consultant to identify the causes of the low user activity of E-learning in the Company. I accomplished qualitative interviews with employees and merchants in 16 supermarkets, spread around the eastern region of Norway.

The findings indicated that most of the merchants experienced E-learning as a useful, informative, effective, timesaving and relevant training tool in the supermarkets. Nevertheless, they were facing some challenges and obstacles, which prevent the optimal use of the E-learning courses. Paradoxically, considering the experience of E-learning as timesaving and effective, the two most typical challenges concerned time and cost. Several merchants pointed out that they neither have time to use or think about E-learning during their hectic workdays. Considering that most of the employees accomplish courses at work, several merchants found E-learning expensive and time consuming. Another challenge for some of the merchants was to encourage or convince employees to use the E-learning courses. The merchants appeared to have the opinion that employees do not bother or do not care about the E-learning courses. According to the employees, one of the main reasons for the low user activity appeared to be a lack of information about the E-learning courses and a lack of focus on E-learning in general. Further, several employees along with the merchants pointed out the lack of dedicated time both at work and home, as a significant reason for not being an active user. Still, most of the employees considered E-learning as a good initiative and a useful and relevant training method in the supermarkets, and they seemed to be motivated.

Based on the findings and my own analysis I suggested some recommendations for increasing the E-learning activity in the supermarkets. Paradoxically, the findings indicated that the merchants experienced E-learning as useful and effective, but the time was considered insufficient. I raised the question whether the lack of time was really about lack of priority and lack of motivation. Further, considering the low degree of information and awareness of E-learning, I suggested visualizing and marketing the E-learning courses at the workplaces and on the Internet. Increased awareness and sufficient information flow might contribute to increase the motivation for using E-learning.

2.2.1 The Facebook group in the Supermarket

As mentioned in the introduction, the merchant in the Supermarket created a Facebook group in order to share information with his employees. Inspired by this, I got an idea of using Facebook in order to increase the accessibility and the awareness of E-learning. Perhaps Facebook could function as a platform for E-learning. In that way, provided that the employees use Facebook in private, the courses might be more accessible and visible. Considering that Facebook is a popular and highly used social network site, the willingness to carry out courses at home might increase. If that were the case, then two of the most typical challenges in relation to E-learning, time and costs, would be solved.

However, these thoughts were only assumptions that needed further research. Hence, in this thesis I want to do a further, in-depth investigation of the Facebook group towards supporting workplace learning in the Supermarket. Before I describe my research questions in more detail, I want to present some theoretical perspectives on social media and learning. What is social media, and how can social media support learning processes in the workplace?

3. Theoretical Perspectives on Social Media & Learning

This chapter starts with a brief view of the history of World Wide Web and E-learning, and a following description of the concepts of Web 2.0, social media and Facebook. Then I present some learning perspectives that seem to have much in common with the practice of social media. First I introduce two different views on E-learning, followed by the dichotomy of Acquisition and Participation as metaphors for learning. Then I present the Sociocultural learning perspective and the theory of Epistemology of process, followed by the concepts of CSCL (Computer-supported-collaborated-learning) and Networked learning. Thereafter I introduce the theories of Communities of practice, Situated learning, Apprenticeship learning and Learning on demand. At the end of the chapter I will draw on a distinction between knowledge in the world and knowledge in the head.

3.1 The emergence of Social Media

3.1.1 The shift from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0

The development of World Wide Web in the mid 1990s increased the interest for E-learning considerably. In many workplaces Learning Management Systems (LMSs) such as BlackBoard and other IT-tools, were implemented and often required for employees to use in order to receive information from the management. The first generation of WWW was dominated by content delivery in which the goal was to make information accessible. The designs of the IT-systems were characterized by a “one size fits all” strategy and gave little room for user participation and flexibility. This resulted in dissatisfaction and opposition followed by much debate concerning E-learning (Dirckinck-Holmfeld & Jones 2009). As an outcome of debates as well as new research, a new social type of Web emerged in the beginning of the new century. The concept of Web 2.0 emerged on a conference held by Tim O’Reilly in 2004 (O’Reilly 2005). In 2005 he suggested the following definition of Web 2.0:

Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all connected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually-updated service that gets better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an "architecture of participation," and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences (O'Reilly radar 2005).

In the definition O'Reilly describes Web 2.0 as a platform, used on all sorts of connected devices, and where the users create and control their own data. The Web 2.0 applications deliver services that are continually updated and gets better the more people use it. While Web 1.0 platforms contain already delivered or published content as in a book, Web 2.0 platforms provide data from multiple sources including individual users who function as participators rather than passive viewers. Web 2.0 focuses on collaboration, dialogue and sharing of visual and auditory content. These characteristics appear in today's use of *social media*.

3.1.2 What is Social Media?

Kitsantas and Dabbagh (2011) explain social media as a variety of network tools or technologies, which focus on the social aspects of the Internet, and which function as a channel for communication, collaboration and creative utterances (Kitsantas & Dabbagh 2011: 3). By the use of social media tools such as Wikipedia, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn, the users share various types of experiences and resources. Such tools consist of virtual communities in which the users are connected to each other in order to communicate, maintain relationships or for professional purposes. Considering that my research aims to study a Facebook group I will now account for the concept of Facebook in greater detail.

Facebook is privately owned by Facebook incorporation, and was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 with the purpose of creating a network among his fellow college students at Harvard University. The following extract from the official website of Facebook shows a definition of the social network site:

Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends and others who work,

study and live around them. (...) Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. (...) Users can add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves. Additionally, users can join networks organized by workplace, school, or college (Facebook).

The definition underlines the social aspect of Facebook in which the users interact through common activities, share information and participate in various types of networks or groups.

3.1.3 Acquisition vs. Participation

The emergence of Web 2.0 and social media occurred as an outcome of new research and several debates regarding the concept of E-learning. According to Weller (2007), the E-learning debate arises from two fundamentally different views of the Internet: The *Broadcast view* and the *Discussion view*. The Broadcast view considers E-learning as a means for delivering and publishing content, while the Discussion view considers E-learning as a means for communication, discussion and dialogue (Weller 2007: 6). Web 1.0 technologies seem to be influenced by the Broadcast view, while Web 2.0 technologies seem to be influenced by the Discussion view.

The distinction between Broadcast and Discussion views can be compared to the dichotomy between the *Acquisition metaphor* and the *Participation metaphor* for learning, introduced by Anna Sfard (1998). Sfard explains the acquisition metaphor as follows: “*The language of "knowledge acquisition" and "concept development" makes us think about the human mind as a container to be filled with certain materials and about the learner as becoming an owner of these materials.*” (Sfard 1998: 5). The acquisition metaphor considers learning as acquisition and accumulation of certain “goods”, and views the learner as a passive receiver of these goods. The role of the teacher is to deliver knowledge with the goal of “filling” and developing the learner’s mind. The participation metaphor, on the other hand, considers learning as something you *do* rather than something you *have*. The learner is viewed as a participator of certain kinds of activities rather than a person who accumulates and possesses knowledge. While the acquisition metaphor highlights the individual mind and its possession of knowledge, the participation metaphor focuses on the social aspects of learning and knowledge development. Sfard (1998) stresses the importance of taking into account both the

acquisition and the participation metaphor. Rather than viewing the metaphors as mutual exclusive, we should view them as two interdependent metaphors that complement each other.

The discussion view of E-learning and the participation metaphor for learning seem to have much in common with the sociocultural learning perspective, which will be introduced next.

3.2 Sociocultural Learning Perspective

Several theorists have pointed out that the Web 2.0 technologies have affected the way people learn through ICT (Dirckinck-Holmfeld & Jones 2009; Mayes & de Freitas 2007; Newell et. al 2009). According to Dirckinck-Holmfeld and Jones (2009), the underlying principles of Web 2.0 seem to relate to a social and participating perspective on learning in which the users are free to negotiate meanings about the design, content and problem definitions. In this thesis Web 2.0 (O'Reilly 2005) as a mediating artifact is closely linked to the *sociocultural learning perspective*, derived from the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (Wertsch 1991, Kozulin et. al. 2003). According to this learning perspective, human cognition and learning are social and take place through our interaction with the environment. Learning and human action are mediated through symbolic artifacts such as language and thought, and physical artifacts such as books and computers (e.g. the web). These mediating artifacts depend on the cultural, historical and institutional settings they are a part of (Wertsch 1991). Learning depends on both collaboration with others and a process of internalization. The learner in a sociocultural learning perspective is an active participant and constructs its knowledge through negotiations of meaning (Kozulin et. al 2003). This learning view differs from the acquisition metaphor for learning, mentioned earlier, in which the learner is seen as a passive receiver of knowledge (Sfard 1998).

Newell et. al (2009) distinguish between two different views of knowledge: *The epistemology of possession* and *The epistemology of practice*. Similar to the acquisition metaphor for learning, the epistemology of possession considers knowledge as something you *have*, in terms of a cognitive asset that can be transferred between individuals. This view seem to be inspired by a cognitive learning perspective where knowledge is seen as a “possession” or

mental capacity that can be developed, applied and transferred. Similar to the participation metaphor for learning, the epistemology of practice considers knowledge as something you *do* rather than something you *have*. This knowledge view relates to the theories about communities of practice, which will be introduced later in this chapter. Newell et. al (2009) criticize both views and claims that knowledge is both social and individual, and it depends on the organizational and cultural context it is a part of. This view is referred to as *the epistemology of process* and is based on the sociocultural learning perspective. According to the epistemology of process, human beings construct their own knowledge based on social, cultural and organizational contexts. Along with the sociocultural learning perspective, knowledge is a subject for different opinions and interpretations, and may change in relation to specific actions or contexts. Knowledge cannot be seen separated from the context in which it is produced. This knowledge view seems to have much in common with the functions of Web 2.0 technologies and the practice of social media. In fact, Newell et. al (2009) claims that Web 2.0 tools will play a central part for knowledge sharing and development in organizations in the future.

3.2.1 CSCL & Networked Learning

Clearly inspired by the sociocultural learning perspective, *Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning* (CSCL) is “concerned with studying how people can learn together with the help of computers” (Stahl et.al 2006: 1). CSCL appeared in the 1990s as a reaction to software that forced students to learn as isolated individuals. It takes into account technology as a mediating tool for collaborative learning, such as face-to-face communication as well as online communication (Stahl et. al 2006).

Another concept based on the sociocultural learning perspective and closely linked to CSCL, is *Networked Learning*. Peter Goodyear et. al (2004) define networked learning as: “*Learning in which information and communication technology (ICT) is used to promote connections: between one learner and other learners; between learners and tutors; between a learning community and its learning resources*” (Goodyear et. al 2004: 1). In line with CSCL and sociocultural learning, networked learning involves human interaction mediated through digital technology. The human interactions may either be synchronous, asynchronous or both.

In synchronous interactions all of the actors are present at the same time, such as in phone conversations, videoconferences or chat. In asynchronous interactions, such as e-mail, SMS, RSS feeds or forums, the actors are not necessarily present at the same time and are therefore more flexible. Goodyear et. al (2004) relate networked learning to pedagogical principles that focus on learning through collaboration, dialogue and participation in communities. These principles are closely linked to the sociocultural learning perspective as well as communities of practice as will be introduced in the next section of this chapter.

Dirckinck-Holmfeld and Jones (2009) explain networked learning as a process that implies mutual interaction between learners, negotiation of meaning through activities as well as social and cultural mediation by tools and resources. The learners in networked learning are active participators; they interact, engage and collaborate in common activities through strong and weak ties. Further, they claim that the Web 2.0 technologies and the increasing accessibility of information through the Internet create new potentials for the practice of networked learning. They believe E-learning has played an important role in the development of cost effective methods for competence development, but networked learning has more potential than conventional E-learning. Dirckinck-Holmfeld and Jones (2009) claim that appropriate organization and design of Web 2.0 tools may satisfy the needs for competence development among professional workers.

Considering that my research is about learning at work, the next section will account for theories concerning communities of practice, apprenticeship learning, situated learning, formal and informal learning and learning on demand.

3.3 Learning at Work

3.3.1 Situated Learning in Communities of Practice

Lave and Wenger (1991) consider learning as a social process in which knowledge is co-constructed and embedded within particular social and physical environments. Learning is developed through the relations between the members of a *community of practice*. The members have various interests and perspectives and may therefore participate and contribute

in different ways. At the same time, the members have a common understanding of the activities taking place and how that might affect their practices and lives. Lave and Wenger (1991) explain community of practice as a group of relations between people, enterprises and the world, which develops over time and in relation to other overlapping communities of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991) point out that the sharing of knowledge within a community of practice occurs naturally and easy because the members develop a mutual understanding of the work, the organization and the world.

Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to the term *situated learning*, which is learning taking place in the same context it is applied. They claim that learning develops in a process of socialization through *legitimate peripheral participation*, in which newcomers of a community of practice gradually become more experienced. Through peripheral activities the newcomers become acquainted with the work tasks, the norms, the vocabulary and the culture of the community. Sharing of knowledge occurs through *apprenticeship learning* in which the apprentice follows a master during the workday, observing his or her actions. Within a community novices or apprentices might also learn from each other. Barbara Rogoff (1990) refers to the same concept as *guided participation* in cultural activity. Clearly inspired by the sociocultural learning perspective, she claims that the individual and the social environment are mutual and not separable. Humans learn and develop in immediate social contexts through problem solving and in sociocultural activities with peers and predecessors.

3.3.2 Cognitive Apprenticeship Learning

Collins (2006) distinguishes between traditional apprenticeship, as described above, and *cognitive apprenticeship*. When referring to the cognitive aspect, Collins focuses on the cognitive skills and processes rather than physical ones. Cognitive apprenticeship takes into account the use of knowledge in solving real problems. In order to learn conceptual and factual knowledge, learners must observe, enact and practice the cognitive skills in various contexts. Collins proposes some principles for designing cognitive apprenticeship environments (Collins 2006: 50). When *modeling*, the learner observes the teacher performing a task. When *coaching*, the teacher facilitates when the learner perform a task, while *scaffolding* involves providing support to help the learner perform a task. *Articulation*

involves encouraging learners to verbalize their knowledge and thinking, while *reflection* is to compare the performance with others. Finally, *exploration* occurs when the teacher invites learners to pose and solve their own problems. Important social characteristics of cognitive apprenticeship environments are situated learning, community of practice, intrinsic motivation and cooperation. Collins claims that the increase of computer-based learning environments will lead to new ways of designing cognitive apprenticeship learning.

3.3.3 Formal and Informal Learning

Brown and Duguid (1991) use the community of practice-concept in relation to organizational theories. Similar to the distinction between formal and informal aspects of learning (Malcolm et. al 2003) as described in the introduction, Brown and Duguid distinguish between *canonical* and *non-canonical practice*. The former refers to the formal work description of the practice such as formal rules and procedures, while the latter refers to the actual practices taking place through informal channels. According to Brown and Duguid, the large gap between the formal and the actual practices in many organizations must be filled in order to foster work, learning and innovation. In particular, they suggest valuing and recognizing the non-canonical practices within the different communities of practice. Here the workers share experienced knowledge with each other and gradually develop a mutual understanding of the tasks and challenges at work. The community is also a place for collaboration, social construction and development of shared identity. By giving the communities of practice some autonomy and leeway beside the formal working criteria, the work practice might improve and facilitate innovation.

Based on the learning perspectives mentioned so far in this chapter, social network sites such as Facebook might facilitate the creation of social networks in which the members can share knowledge as well as create social relations and communities of practice. Such a community of practice may function as a platform for sharing of meanings, understandings, information and knowledge through formal and informal learning processes. The next sections introduce some concepts clearly inspired by the learning perspectives above. These concepts focus on learning and knowledge in light of new technology or, in terms of Vygotsky, technical artifacts.

3.3.4 Learning on Demand

Gerhard Fischer (2000) is inspired by the concept of situated learning. He applies the term *lifelong learning*, which he explains as a “*continuous engagement in inquiring and applying knowledge and skills in the context of self-directed problems*” (Fischer 2000: 8). Fischer points out that lifelong learning is more than training or continuing education. The concept covers multiple types of learning, such as conceptual understanding and practical application of knowledge, in a wide range of different settings such as academic education, informal lifelong learning and professional and industrial training. Moreover, Fischer (2001) claims that lifelong learning creates the challenge of understanding, exploring and supporting new forms of learning that fit into the knowledge society. One of the “*innovative forms of lifelong learning*” suggested by Fischer is *learning on demand*, which he describes as follows:

Users learn to use a new feature or acquire new information when it is needed during work. Learning on demand is a promising approach because (1) it contextualizes learning by integrating it into work rather than relegates it to a separate phase, and (2) it lets users see for themselves the usefulness of new information for authentic problem situations, thereby increasing the motivation for learning. (Fischer & Ye 2002: 159).

Fischer claims that workplace training often deals with decontextualized knowledge presented by instructors who know little about the real problems occurring in working life. Hence, there is a need to integrate learning processes into ongoing, self-directed, work-related activities. Learning on demand requires the integration of work and learning in order for people to learn within the context of their work, based on real-world problems (Fischer 2000). Similar, Mørch and Skaanes (2010) conceptualize the terms primary and secondary work in order to fill the gap between work and learning. In line with Brown and Duguid (1991), Fischer (2000) and Mørch & Skaanes (2010) suggest informal workplace learning as a way of integrating work and learning. Such learning, when properly mediated by technology, can facilitate self-directed learning, in which the problems are not given but jointly constructed. The learner/worker is confronted with demanding aspects of the work accidentally, for instance when a problem or a breakdown occurs in an ordinary work situation. In order to solve these problems, the worker is demanded to use the world as a resource at hand, rather than relying exclusively on a predefined curriculum or a readymade text. Communication plays an important role in terms of discussing issues and solving problems in collaboration with co-

workers, clients and customers. Moreover, Fischer (2000) claims that learning on demand requires innovative media and technologies supporting lifelong learning. Ahead of its time, he notes the following about the role of new technology:

One of the major roles for new media and new technology is not to deliver predigested information to individuals but to provide the opportunity and resources for engaging in meaningful activity, for social debate and discussion, for creating shared understanding among stakeholders, and for framing and solving authentic problems. (Fischer 2000: 9).

These roles are in line with the underlying principles of Web 2.0 technologies and social media mentioned earlier, which provide the opportunity for engaging in self-directed activities and social debate and discussion. Fischer notes that computational media have the potential of making information relevant to the task at hand, and may therefore support lifelong learning and learning on demand.

3.4 Knowledge in the World and in the Head

Donald Norman distinguishes between *knowledge in the world* and *knowledge in the head* (Norman 2001). When information needed to do a task is readily available in the environment, the need to learn and memorize it reduces. Many typists, for instance, have not memorized the letters on the keyboard and are therefore dependent on the labeled letters in order to type. With experience some typists memorize the positions of the letters on the keyboard in order to type more rapidly. The information needed to type has been internally coded in the typist's memory, and the knowledge has moved from the world and into the head. If you ask the typists to describe the order of the letters on the keyboard, however, many of them will not be able to answer. The *declarative* knowledge of where the letters are positioned has been internally coded in the memory and become *procedural*. In other words, the typists know *how* to type but they do not know how to describe the knowledge of the action. Such procedural knowledge is difficult or impossible to describe or teach and is best learned through practice. Declarative knowledge, on the other hand, is easy to write down and to teach, and is therefore easily available in the world. Knowledge in the world, such as

written memory notes, signs, desk calendars or electronic alarm clocks, can function as reminders or tools in order to complete tasks. The “pocket notes”, which will be introduced later in this thesis, are a part of knowledge in the world. The employees in the Supermarket use the pocket notes as reminders for carry out the work routines. As Fischer (2000) points out mentioned earlier, workers are demanded to use the world as a resource at hand when problems occur at work. According to Norman (2001), the efficiency of this knowledge might decrease by the time it takes to search for and interpret the external information. Knowledge in the head, on the other hand, has been internalized and automated and is therefore more efficient in use. Now, which tools can be used in order to gain knowledge in the world and knowledge in the head?

3.4.1 Tools for living and tools for learning

Carmien and Fischer (2005) introduce the concepts of *tools for living* and *tools for learning* in order to discuss the use of artifacts as tools, particularly computational artifacts. *Tools for living* are external artifacts that support people in doing things that they could not do by themselves. Such a tool improves the person’s capability within a specific task without requiring any learning, i.e. internalization of required knowledge. Tools for living therefore seem to support the *knowledge in the world* (Norman 2001). A hand calculator might for instance empower arithmetic skills that people could not have without the tool. Other tools for living can be ladders, eyeglasses, telephones, and memory notes such as the “pocket notes” in the Supermarket. They are all tools that some people need in order to function in daily life or to carry out specific tasks.

Tools for learning, on the other hand, support people in learning new skills with the goal that they will eventually become independent of the tool. Such tools serve as scaffolding and provide for internalization of abilities or functions, and therefore seem to support *knowledge in the head* (Norman 2001). The use of training wheels when learning to ride a bike might serve as a tool for learning.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter I have given a survey of several learning perspectives that align with the use of social media as tools for learning. Theories within the sociocultural learning perspective as well as theories inspired by situated learning seem to have a common denominator for collaboration, dialogue, mutual engagement, social participation and situated learning. They all seem to view the learner as an active participant rather than a “container” to be “filled” with predefined knowledge. A claim in this thesis is that social network sites like Facebook facilitate such learning processes. The users of Facebook may collaborate, communicate, engage and participate in mutual activities, create social networks and share information. The users may decide and control their own content and participation, as well as contribute to further development of the system. Hence, according to the mentioned learning perspectives, Facebook is an appropriate social network site that might function as a mediating artifact for learning at work.

On the other hand, as Sfard (1998) points out, there is a need for supporting both “acquisition” and “participation” learning, and according to the sociocultural learning perspective, knowledge is both individual and social. Individual learning seems to be supported by other means, such as the individual-based E-learning courses provided by the Company. This type of learning is partly outside the scope of my research, however, as I do not carry out pre/post tests to identify what the individual users learn from the E-learning courses. As will be pointed out in the next chapters, my research is descriptive and aims to describe the current learning situation in the Supermarket with a focus on Facebook as a mediating artifact.

4. Problem Framing

Based on the theoretical perspectives on social media and learning, I believe that social media and Web 2.0 technologies have a potential for mediating learning at work. In the pilot study, described in chapter two, I suggested that Facebook might function as a platform for knowledge sharing in the Supermarket. In order to explore these issues I raise the following research questions:

1. How is learning taking place in the Supermarket?
 - a. How is (management initiated) training organized?
 - b. How are informal (worker initiated) learning processes occurring?
 - c. How is knowledge facilitated and with what means?

In order to answer the questions above I want to take a closer look at the Facebook group used in the Supermarket, and examine the activities taking place there. In addition, I want to talk to some of the users in order to explore their experiences of E-learning and the Facebook group.

5. Methods

In order to examine how learning takes place in the Supermarket, I decided to base my research on qualitative methodology with a grounded theory approach. The reason for choosing qualitative methods lies in the fact that I am searching for in-depth insight about the work-related activities as well as the workers' personal experiences and interactions. Based on the pilot study of E-learning in the Company, I decided to take a closer look at the Facebook group created by the merchant in the Supermarket. I therefore contacted the merchant and he added me as a member of the closed Facebook group. Now, with a foot inside the group, the next step was choosing a method for collecting the data. I decided to use *virtual ethnography* (Hine 2000: 1), which brings into focus both the assumptions based on conventional ethnography and the features regarding the technologies concerned. As a supplement to the virtual ethnography, I decided to conduct qualitative face-to-face interviews with selected members of the Facebook group, in order to examine their experiences and attitudes toward the group. Hence, I am left with two sets of data material; one collected from the Facebook group and the other from qualitative interviews. Further, the data analysis is based on grounded theory. Because my research questions are descriptive and searchable for status quo, I believe the most appropriate way of approaching the data material is to let the data "speak for it self". Finally, I aim to compare the data analysis with current research on the field, as a third method. Hence, the use of virtual ethnography, qualitative interviews and comparative analysis provide a triangulation of methods, which I believe reinforces the quality of my research.

This chapter starts with a presentation of qualitative research as methodology, and then moves on to virtual ethnography and interview as methods for collecting data. Further, I present grounded theory as the method of approaching the data material, with a specific focus on comparative analysis. Towards the end of this chapter I present some ethical considerations relevant to my research, and then illuminate a discussion of the quality of the research in terms of validity, reliability and generalization.

5.1 Qualitative Research

It is not my intention to deliberate on the tensions between qualitative and quantitative research methods, nor is it my intention to favor qualitative research. I believe the selection of research methods should rely on the thesis and research questions. My research questions are descriptive and aim to explore a selected amount of data in detail, rather than creating relations between variables that are operationally defined (Silverman 2005). In qualitative research, “detail” is found in precise information about matters such as people’s understandings and interactions, and the researchers tend to use a non-positivist model of reality. Instead, the focus of many qualitative researchers is on the socially constructed nature of reality as well as the intimate relationship between the researcher and the object. Hence, I chose to use qualitative methods in order to gain a deep understanding of how Facebook may be related to learning. Although qualitative research involves a wide range of methods and allows for contrasting models, Silverman (2005) mentions two models of interest to me. *Constructionism* focuses on the actors’ behavior with the aim of studying how phenomena are constructed, drawing on observation, texts and tapes as the preferred data. *Emotionalism* focuses on the actors’ perceptions, meanings and emotions with the aim of authentic insight based on open-ended interviews (Silverman 2005: 11). In my research I combine these two models in the application of both virtual ethnography and qualitative interviews. When searching for descriptive data, I am curious about the interactions and activities taking place on Facebook as well as the users’ experiences and understandings.

5.1.1 Virtual Ethnography

Christine Hine developed the concept of virtual ethnography “*as a response to the need to study communities in which the use of electronic communications such as provided by computer networks are routine.*” (Hine 2000: 1). She introduces this method by highlighting a debate about the impact of technology and the Internet. All the way back to the beginning of the 20th century, theorists have predicted radical future effects of the impact of technology. Theorists of modernity, in particular, consider the new communication technologies as agents of radical change in social organizations. Hine, on the other hand, calls into question this view of what she refers to as technologically deterministic. She leans toward assumptions that the

mentioned impacts do not occur because of the quality of the technology itself, but as a result of contingent sets of social processes. The impacts depend on the users' attitudes, expectations and assumptions of technologies, conceptions of what technology can and cannot do, as well as how the technology is represented in the media or in organizations (Hine 2000). Similar, in this study of Facebook, my aim is to consider these aspects in order to achieve a clear understanding of the use of the technology.

Hine suggests ethnography as an ideal methodological starting point for studying the everyday practices around the Internet. She refers to a basic definition of ethnography by Hammersley and Atkinson, which she claims is applicable to most studies. They point out that ethnography usually refers to social research with “*a strong emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena*” (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983: 248). Further, in light of qualitative methodology, they relate ethnography to examination of a small number of cases in detail, involving interpretations of the meanings and functions of human actions. In my case, as I became a member of the Facebook group I had limited expectations and insight about the activity taking place. This lack of knowledge made it easier for me to adopt an explorative approach when studying the interactions on Facebook. Moreover, Hine makes the following justification when arguing for ethnography as the appropriate methodology for studying the Internet:

Beliefs about the Internet may have significant consequences for how we relate to the technology and to one another through it. Ethnography can therefore be used to develop an enriched sense of the meanings of the technology and the cultures which enable it and are enabled by it (Hine 2000: 8).

In other words, ethnography of the Internet will contribute to explore the ways in which a technology is experienced *in use*. In her development of virtual ethnography as a concept, Hine aimed to combine two ways of viewing the Internet: As a culture in its own right and as a cultural artifact. The first view considers Internet as a space, a cyberspace, where culture is formed and reformed and where applications of the technology can be studied (Hine 2000). With this in mind, I wanted to explore how the members of the Facebook group use the technology, and how the technology potentially leads to learning. The second view considers Internet as a product of a culture, produced by particular people with contextually situated goals and priorities, and shaped by the ways it is marketed, taught and used. Ideas of the

application of technologies are developed in context, and the local contexts of interpretation and use form the ethnographic field (Hine 2000). In the same way, Facebook as a technology is interpretive flexible in its use. The simple user and cultures of users have different goals and interests, and thus form the content and activities taking place on Facebook. Similar, I wanted to explore how the members of the Facebook group form the practice of the group, and eventually how they can exploit the group as a mediating tool for learning.

Based on the view of virtual ethnography described above, I collected and observed former and present activity on the Facebook group, posted from June 11, 2011 to March 14, 2012. Then I conducted textual analysis of the posts. Because of limited time I decided to be as far as possible a nonparticipant observer, meaning I was not an active member of the group although I was visible to the other members. During the time I was observing the group I intentionally did not post anything on the wall, and all contact with the merchant and the selected employees was conceived through private messages. However, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 249) point out, a clear distinction between participant and nonparticipant observation is not very useful because it indicates that the nonparticipant observer plays no recognized role at all. Hence, the fact that I was not an active member of the Facebook group does not exclude the possibility for affecting the members' activity. After all, I was present as a visible and unfamiliar member.

5.1.2 Qualitative interviews

After the observation and analysis of the activity on Facebook, I still had some unanswered questions. I was curious about how the members experience the Facebook group compared to E-learning courses and I wanted to get a deeper insight of particular posts.

In order to answer these questions I decided to conduct qualitative interviews with four members of the group, including three employees and the merchant. The criteria for the selection of informants were the completion of E-learning courses as well as being an active member of the Facebook group. Nevertheless, things do not always go as planned. When I was about to interview female employee number two, it turned out that she had neither carried out nor looked at any E-learning courses. Further, the male employee I selected because of his high engagement on the group did not have time to talk to me after all, as he was on duty. So,

I spoke with another randomly chosen male employee that had completed E-learning but was less active on the Facebook group. Hence, my sample of informants turned out to be partly selected and partly random.

In advance of the interviews I developed a semi-structured interview guide (appendix 3), inspired by Steinar Kvale (1996: 124). During the interviews I aimed to speak freely and use the interview guide as a memory note, in order to provide a natural dialogue, which I believe captures realistic questions and true answers. Moreover, I used screen shots of the Facebook group as tools to support the informants' memory and to get deeper into the particular activities. Appendix 4 shows two of these screen shots. One of the challenges I faced during the virtual ethnography of Facebook was the interpretation of textual posts, which lack the tone of voice, gestures and body language. In one case, I noticed two conflicting posts by the merchant. The first one contained a request for feedback regarding the Facebook group, with zero responds. In the subsequent post a few days later, the merchant thanked the employees for all the great answers and praised them for being so active on the Facebook group. I could not see any responses from the employees, and wondered if they had used other media or answered directly to the merchant at work. During the interviews, however, it turned out that the merchant was being ironic when he praised the employees for all the answers. Apparently, no one had given any response to the request. This case illustrates the importance of a dialogue with the informants, in order to clarify such obscurities and misunderstandings as well as to get a deeper understanding of the phenomena.

5.1.3 Grounded Theory

I decided to base my qualitative research on grounded theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967), the founders of the approach, focus on discovery of theory rather than verification, which they believe has been overemphasized in previous research. In their eyes, generation of theory based on empirical data is the main objective of research. The goal is not to ask whether a theory is true or false, but when it applies and under what circumstances it works (Glaser & Strauss 1967). Inspired by this view, I aimed to approach my research inductively in order to gain a deep and sensitive understanding of Facebook in relation to learning. In practice, this means that I tried to ignore the literature related to the research field in order to have an open

mind prior to the virtual ethnography and the interviews. Further, I used the same inductive approach when I initiated the procedure of coding (Glaser & Strauss 1967), in order to assure that the development of coding categories would not be disturbed by already established concepts from the literature. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, my aim was to let the data “speak for it self” by using emerging concepts and expressions as analytic categories for organizing data.

Silverman (2005) refers to the mentioned concept as *simplistic inductivism* and points out two objections to this approach. First, approaching a research field with an open mind is clearly challenging, and any researcher comes to a field with some assumptions, ideas or tools. Glaser and Strauss (1967) point out that grounded theory is developed inductively but they also highlight the impossibility of approaching reality as a *tabula rasa*. The personal and theoretical experiences that researchers bring may serve as material for the generation of categories. Secondly, Silverman states that inductive field research may lead to sloppy, unfocused research including a loose design, which leads to a less selective collection of data (Silverman 2005). In order to face this challenge, I developed and used a semi-structured interview guide, as mentioned earlier. Also, during the analysis I aimed to select the most relevant data in relation to my research questions. Doing this, however, may unintentionally ignore data that turn out to be of importance later in the process. In addition, the selection of short extracts also questions the reliability of the findings, which will be illuminated in the next sections. Before that, there are some ethical issues related to my research that need to be considered.

5.2 Ethical considerations

Qualitative research methods often involve close and personal relations between the researcher and the informant. In my research the informants` appearance and full names are visible to me, as opposed to quantitative research where the informants are invisible. These close relations raise some ethical issues that need to be considered, in order to avoid abuse of sensitive personal information.

Kvale (1996) suggests the following three ethical guidelines for qualitative researchers, which I have attempted to follow in my research: Informed consent, confidentiality and consequences. From the beginning of my research I was open and honest about the purpose and my intentions. The merchant informed all the members of the Facebook group by posting a copied version of the e-mail I sent him, which included brief information about my purpose and thoughts regarding my master thesis. Then he wrote a short message on the wall that they would have a new member on the group the next weeks, and apparently in a humoristic way he told them to be nice to me. I believe this simple joke, in addition to my visual presence on Facebook, compensated for potentially experiencing the situation as formal and grave. I can imagine that it might be a bit uncomfortable and maybe inhibitory to be observed and analyzed by some stranger from a university. I also had this issue in mind during the interviews, considering the tape recorder that might tend to frighten the subjects. As a consequence, I made an effort to make the setting causal and safe, by facilitating an informal conversation and natural dialogue, as mentioned earlier.

Before I started the tape recorder I informed the subjects about their anonymity, which brings forward confidentiality as another ethical issue to consider (Kvale 1996). Both the virtual ethnography of Facebook and the interview settings imply personal information that identifies the subjects. Thus, in order to protect their privacy I decided to remove the name of the Supermarket chain as well as the particular supermarket, and I replaced the informants' names with gender and work position. In this way, neither the Supermarket chain nor the individual subjects will be identified or recognized by the public.

The third ethical issue according to Kvale (1996) concerns the consequences that qualitative research may have on the subjects as well as the group they represent. My research does not include personal or sensitive purposes, such as for instance harsh critique of the Retail industry. My purposes are in larger degree directed toward optimism, considering the search for the *potential* of Facebook. Hence, the occurrence of consequences that may harm the subjects or the group is, in my case, unlikely. On the contrary, I believe this research may lead to some benefits for the merchant as well as the employees in the Supermarket. The results may give the merchant some useful knowledge about how to exploit Facebook as a tool for learning at work.

5.3 Quality in qualitative research

When examining social worlds, such as the Facebook group in the Supermarket, the aim for qualitative researchers is to produce descriptions that correspond to the social world being described (Peräkylä 2011). Silverman (2005) and Kvale (1996), as well as others, highlight that the quality of data in qualitative research should be high. The quality of my research relies on the concepts of reliability, validity and generalization. How can I convince my readers that my research findings are consistent and that my analytical claims are valid? And are my conclusions representative of other supermarkets in the Retail industry?

5.3.1 Reliability

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency in the research findings (Kvale 1996). One way of supporting the reliability of my research was to avoid using leading questions during the interviews. Another issue regarding reliability is the control of analysis when dealing with large amounts of complex interview data (Kvale 1996). Research reports only include extracts from the data material, and tape recordings and transcripts are not visible to the reader. Silverman (2005) refers to this issue as the problem of anecdotalism, which he claims is one of the weaknesses in qualitative research. He points out that in many observational studies the reader has to depend on the researcher's presentation of the data material. So, how can I convince my readers that my research report is genuinely based on critical investigation of all my data?

Kvale (1996: 207) suggests two approaches to control the interview analysis: The use of multiple interpreters and the explication of procedures. In order to control my subjectivity, I let my supervisor read and analyze the interview transcripts and the virtual ethnography of Facebook. I believe that working together in the procedures of coding and analysis, will lead to an inter-subjective agreement that empowers and enriches the analysis. Moreover, as illustrated in the next chapter, I present examples of the used materials and give descriptions of the context in which they were selected. Silverman (2005) highlights the concept of low-inference descriptors, which involve detailed data presentations that lead to minimal inferences. I will present a detailed presentation of my interview data, including long extracts

that contain questions, comments and responses. I believe such detailed extracts will strengthen the reliability of my research findings. Further, based on the presentations of both data materials I will make some analytical claims that lead to a few conclusions. Hence, the next question is whether my analytical claims are considered valid and generalizable.

5.3.2 Validity

Validity involves issues regarding the controversial concept of truth. Kvale (1996: 231) represents “*a rather moderate postmodernism*” in the discussion of validity as social constructed. I support and use this approach when dealing with issues of validity, because I reject the belief of an objective reality and a true knowledge, which takes place in positivistic approaches. In a postmodern context knowledge is understood as a linguistic and social construction of reality with focus on interpretation and negotiation of meanings (Kvale 1996). Similar, in my research I do not believe in or search for a true answer, which I can easily generalize to other contexts. I rather believe that there are multiple valid answers to be identified and elaborated.

According to Kvale (1996), the criteria and forms of validation has changed as a consequence of the shift from the prediction of facts within modernistic approaches towards interpretation of meaning making (Kvale 1996). Following Popper, Kvale suggests moving the focus away from verification of theories towards falsification. Validation then involves examining and providing arguments for the credibility of alternative answers and knowledge claims.

According to Kvale (1996), this type of validation depends on the quality of the *craftsmanship* during investigation, including continually checking, questioning and theoretically interpreting the findings. Such investigated concept of validation is often used in the grounded theory approach mentioned earlier in this chapter. Inspired by this approach, the intention of my research was not to verify or control the findings, but rather to continually check the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. During the procedure of analysis, in particular, I attempted to explore my interpretations by theoretically investigating the phenomena of Facebook in relation to learning. This type of comparative analysis is a part of a comprehensive data treatment, which Silverman (2005) highlights as a way of thinking critically about qualitative data analysis in order to achieve more valid findings. I applied

current research in the same field in order to support my own findings. Altogether, the findings from the current research as well as the virtual ethnography and the interviews constitute a data triangulation, which I believe strengthens the validity of my conclusions.

5.3.3 Generalizability

Postmodern approaches focus on the heterogeneity and contextuality of knowledge, rather than generalization of some objective truth (Kvale 1996). Kvale attempts to demystify the concepts of reliability, validity and generalization by bringing them back to its everyday language and interaction. He suggests, among other types, the concept of analytical generalization, which involves “*a reasoned judgment about the extent to which the findings from one study can be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation*” (Kvale 1996: 233). This type of generalization is based on what he refers to as assertational logic.

According to this concept, the question of generalization in my research could be based on the comparative analysis, just mentioned above, and whether my analytical claims are convincing. So, can my findings be useful as a guide for merchants in other supermarkets?

Although the Company has a franchise business model, which makes the merchant self-employed, they have a common set of values, routines and guidelines, represented in the E-learning courses (see chapter 2). In that way, the nearly 500 supermarkets are approximately equal with regard to basic routines at work and guidelines controlled by the top management. These guidelines also include the E-learning courses, which apply to all the supermarkets. Hence, there are reasons to assume that my findings and analytical claims can function as a guide for other merchants, provided that they are motivated for the use of Facebook. On the other hand, the supermarkets are spread across the whole country, which make a wide range of geographical, cultural and human differences among the workers. As a consequence, the merchants may have different interests, intentions and goals, as well as different types of business and management strategies. Hence, it seems to be risky to determine and develop some “best practice” guidelines for the application of Facebook, which can apply to all the merchants in the Company. What is less risky, however, is to develop some suggestions for the merchant in the Supermarket, in order for him to exploit the Facebook group with respect to his own practice and employees. Although I cannot assume that these suggestions can

function as guidelines for other merchants across the country, they may function as inspiration. Also, considering the flexibility of Facebook, the merchants are free to decide how to customize the use of it to their own practice and interest. The main question for further work is whether my suggestions are convincing and appropriate for merchants outside the Supermarket.

6 Data and Analysis

6.1 The Data Material

My research questions aim to explore how learning takes place in the Supermarket. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this research is not a casual study but rather an aim to examine the status quo and the potential of Facebook as a learning tool. In order to answer my research questions, I have carried out a virtual ethnography of the Facebook group in the Supermarket and qualitative interviews with four of the members. In the virtual ethnography I collected and observed all activity on the group, posted from June 11, 2011 to March 14, 2012. *The Facebook data* includes a textual log of the activity in a sequential order. *The interview data* includes transcriptions of audio recordings from the interviews with the merchant and three employees. At the interview with the merchant I received two memory notes containing work routines for the employees to keep in their pockets. The notes constitute the third set of data material, and will be referred to as *the pocket notes* (appendix 5). In sum, the total set of data material includes *the Facebook data*, *the interview data* and *the pocket notes*. The next sections include context descriptions of each set of data material.

6.1.1 The Facebook Group

The Facebook data shows that the merchant created The Facebook Group and added all the members on June 11, 2011. The group contains 20 members, including myself, the merchant and 18 employees. The group is *closed*, meaning that anyone can see the group and who is in it but only members of the group can see the posts. According to the Facebook data, the merchant is the most active user being responsible for the majority of the posts, which include notes, weekly updates, photos, video clips, links, invitation to events, external e-mails, happenings and news. Some of the posts are “liked” and commented by employees, while other posts are untouched and not responded to at all. The posts from employees consist of information about available work shifts and requests for shift replacement, photos of social gatherings and employees, Christmas and New Years greetings, photos and information about

food products, photos of the supermarket and some practical information about every day work.

6.1.2 The Interviews

Based on a semi-structured interview guide (appendix 3), I have carried out qualitative interviews in the Supermarket. My informants include the merchant, two female employees and one male employee. The merchant is 27 years old and has been a merchant in the Supermarket since 2008. Female employee 1 is 23 years old and has worked full-time in the Supermarket for about 5 years. In advance of the interview she took the *introductory* course (appendix 2), but she has not completed E-learning as part of the compulsory training. Female employee 2 is 20 years old and has worked part-time beside her studies for about one year. In advance of the interviews, the merchant informed me that all three of the employees had completed at least one E-learning course. In the interview with female employee 2, however, it turned out that she had not tried E-learning after all. Nevertheless, the Facebook data indicates that she is one of the most active members of the Facebook group among the employees. Both of the female employees work in the check out counter. The male employee is 17 years old and has worked part-time beside school for almost 2 years. He works in the inventory and is responsible for arranging the groceries in the shelves. When he turns 18 he will start working in the check out counter. Two weeks before the interview the male employee completed the E-learning course about the check out routines as well the introductory course.

6.1.3 The Pocket Notes

The merchant has created memory notes for the employees to keep in their pockets while they are working. The “pocket notes” contain descriptions of specific work routines for the employees to follow during work. Appendix 5 shows two of the memory notes, which contain washing and cleaning routines for the females working in the check out and for the males working in the inventory.

6.2 Findings

Based on the total set of data material mentioned above, I have identified four categories, which will be analyzed and discussed in light of my research questions. The following categories are:

1. Training and E-learning
2. Information sharing
3. Learning at work
4. Pocket notes

6.2.2 Training and E-learning

Considering that one of my research questions aim to explore how the training is organized, I asked the informants about the possibility to use the Facebook group as part of the training in the Supermarket. The following extract shows a conversation with the merchant about his use of Facebook in relation to training and E-learning.

Extract 1

Interviewer: *Tror du Facebook kan brukes som et verktøy i opplæringen...*

Merchant: *Nei.*

Interviewer: *i butikken?*

Merchant: *Eh. Nei sa jeg.. jeg sa fort nei! Jeg sa veldig fort nei (forundret). Det vet jeg ikke. Eh.. det eneste jeg kan tenke meg er kanskje å legge til en ny ansatt og si: Scroll tilbake og se over noen av innlegga. Men, som en e-læring på nye brukere så tror jeg det er sjanseløst. Men det er en fin måte å komme fortere inn i systemet på.*

Interviewer: *Å ta en titt på den siden?*

Merchant: *I hvert fall komme inn i tankegangen på dette her (...)*

Interviewer: *Men tror du Facebook kan spille en rolle ift e-læring da? Tror du det går an å kombinere det?*

Merchant: (Humrer) *Ja du kan lage det som de spillene.. "Jeg fikk 6000 poeng på (introduksjonskurset)". Du har sett dem derre spilla, du vet hva jeg snakker om nå? (...) Hvis du kombinerer e-læringskurs og en quiz for eksempel på slutten, det er det jo veldig ofte da, en spørsmålsrunde på slutten. Eh. Du kan ha for eksempel noe så enkelt som.. det største problemet når du begynner i kassa i (butikken), det er koder. Og spill.. bilde av mango, kode på mango, bilde av banan, kode på banan. Ikke sant.*

Interviewer: *Ja, å bruke spill som et virkemiddel?*

Merchant: *Ja, spill som et virkemiddel. Og da har du: Jeg scora så og så mange poeng.. det er litt kult. Noe sånt, jeg vet ikke jeg?*

(...)

Interviewer: *Yes. Har du andre tanker om hvordan man kan bruke Facebook til opplæring?*

Merchant: *Nei altså, opplæring.. (Tenker)*

Interviewer: *Eller kompetanseutvikling?*

Merchant: *Kompetanseutvikling eh.. bruker jeg det til. Men opplæring bruker jeg det ikke til. Når jeg lærer opp folk så bruker jeg, hva skal en kalle, sånn type makkersystem, at jeg har en erfaren person som lærer opp den nye, og det hjelper på to måter, altså da har den personen som kan tingen, han vokser fordi han lærer opp en annen. Samtidig som at den nye får også opplæring. Også er det mindre skummelt hvis en på ca samme alder skal lære deg opp, enn hvis han hadde vært 50 og en gammel sjef.*

In the extract the merchant doubts the possibility to use Facebook as a tool for training in the supermarkets. He points out that new employees may take a look at the earlier activity on the Facebook group in order to acquaint themselves with the work routines etc. Further, I ask about the possibility to combine Facebook and E-learning. The merchant suggests using games as a tool in the E-learning courses and use Facebook as a platform to share the results and points. Later in the interview, he clearly states that he applies the Facebook group for competence development but not for training. The current training in the Supermarket includes a “partner system” in which an experienced employee trains the new employee. In that way, the new employee will be trained and the “teacher” will grow and develop as well. The merchant seems to prefer this type of training.

In line with extract 1, the Facebook data shows that only a few posts on the group are linked to training. One of the posts (the first screen shot in appendix 4) contains a link to the supplier of the betting system in the supermarket. In the post the merchant suggests to follow the link and carry out the training if the employees have the need to be more confident in how to handle the betting system. The level ranges from basic to semi-professional operations and the merchant communicates that he wants them all to learn at least the basic operations. Further, he informs about the equipment needed to log into the training program. In advance of the interviews I was curious about this training program and, despite the absent of response, whether some of the employees had followed the merchant’s suggestions. The next extract shows a conversation from the interview in which I show the merchant a screen shot from the Facebook post just mentioned.

Extract 2

Interviewer: *Men jeg så en ting du la ut her (viser til eks. 9): "Vi begynner med opplæring på tippedissen i løpet av uken..." Og da kan de gå inn på den siden? Hva er det som skjer der da?*

Merchant: *Da må du bruke den her (tar opp et apparat), den ser du er godt brukt (den er pakket inn i plast). Du ser den er godt brukt. Eh, jeg fikk veldig mye spørsmål, altså tippinga, brukergrensesnittet på tippinga ble gjort om. Da fikk jeg veldig mye spørsmål om hva gjør jeg nå (kjøpmann)? Da begynte vi på nytt igjen, og da var ting skummelt. Og da måtte jeg inn og prøve å skjønne dette her og da fikk jeg spørsmål om åssen det funka. Dem har e-læringskurs på Norsk Tipping også. (...)*

Interviewer: *Så det er e-læringskurs? Og da må du bruke det der? (Peker på apparatet).*

Merchant: *Ja. Da har du spillekort, så du må ha spillekort med deg. Også må du sette i spillekorta. Også bruker du det som en typ kodenøkkel for å komme deg inn, den identifiserer deg gjennom.. den brikka. For å komme seg gjennom sikkerhetsmuren til Norsk Tipping.*

Interviewer: *Også tar de kurset når de har kommet seg inn der?*

Merchant: *Mhm. Det er typ samme som brikka di til nettbanken.*

Interviewer: *Og det kurset er som et vanlig e-læringskurs egentlig?*

Merchant: *Jeg sitter ganske mye igjen av det e-læringskurset så jeg husker ganske mye av det.*

Interviewer: *Så her har du faktisk lagt ut en link til e-læringskurs på Facebook-siden?*

Merchant: *Det er en link.. Ja. Retten og sletten.*

Interviewer: *Men var det obligatorisk?*

Merchant: *Nei det var helt 100 % frivillig. (Leser fra posten): "Gi meg et lite signal dere som ønsker å bli mer sikre på hvordan tippedissen fungerer". Altså da.. hvis jeg ønsker at noen skal gjennomføre det så skriver jeg det ikke så søtt.*

Interviewer: *Nei. Det har jeg sett faktisk. (humrer) Men tror du noen har gjort det?*

Merchant: *Nei jeg vet at ingen har gjort det.*

(...)

Interviewer: *Ja men dette her er jo interessant da. For her kombinerer du jo e-læring og Facebook.*

Merchant: *Ja jeg har faktisk gjort det du spurte om tidligere jeg, uten å vite det! Så kult.*

Merchant: *Det er kult. Men ikke så god respons da.*

Merchant: *Nei det var skummelt igjen.*

Interviewer: *Kanskje fordi det ikke er obligatorisk, eller at de ikke skjønner hva det er.. jeg veit ikke..?*

Merchant: *Hmm nei.. eh.. hadde jeg gjort det obligatorisk så er det klart at nivået på den tingen hadde blitt heva. Nivået til dem ansatte hadde jo blitt heva da, hadde de fått et e-læringskurs på det. Eh... men altså det er ikke akkurat rocket science da. Du trykker på en knapp hvor det står 1, og da kjøper du en en-ukers og trykker du på 5 så kjøper du en fem-ukers. Så det var bare brukersnittet som var litt annerledes.*

Interviewer: *Også er det ikke sikkert de har behov for det heller? Hvis de kan det fra før?*

Merchant: *Nei det gjør dem ikke. Det gjør dem ikke. Det er bare enklere å la være. Alt man kan la være gjør man.*

In the extract the merchant explains that the employees started to ask questions about how to handle the new betting system. So, he found an E-learning course supplied by *Norsk Tipping* and posted the link on the Facebook group for the employees to follow. In the interview the merchant shows me a device and explains that you need to insert a betting card into it in order to log into the E-learning portal. As the merchant confirms, the device is still sealed and obviously not used. Moreover, the merchant points out that the E-learning course is one hundred percent voluntary for the employees. He claims that if he wanted the employees to carry out the course, he would not expressed himself in the “cute” terms of “give me a signal if you would like to be more confident on the betting system”. Also, he is certain that if he made the E-learning course mandatory, the level of skills would increase. Simultaneously, he claims that the tipping system is not very complicated to learn but the interface is a bit different from the old one. As a response to this claim I ask if the employees do not have the need to learn it after all considering it is not complicated. The merchant clearly points out, however, that the employees are not able to handle the system but they do not bother to carry out the E-learning course. He claims that the avoidable will always be avoided.

According to the merchant, the employees should learn the new user interface of the betting system. Despite this need, however, none of the employees have initiated to carry out the E-learning course. The extract (2) indicates that some of the statements from the merchant contradict each other. The merchant communicates that he wants the employees to have the basic skills of the betting system. Accordingly, in the interview he states that he posted the link because of an obvious need for further training. Simultaneously, the merchant claims that if he wanted the employees to carry out the course he would not express himself in such soft terms. Also, if he made the course mandatory the level of skills would certainly increase. The two first statements indicate that the merchant finds it necessary to carry out the E-learning course in order to raise the level of skills. According to the two previous statements, however, the merchant seems to be somewhat passive about the E-learning course with respect to his lack of encouragement and effort to carry out the training. Another contradiction may be found in the merchant’s claim that the betting system is not very complicated to learn. At the same time he claims that the employees have a need to learn it, but they do not bother to follow the link and carry out the E-learning course. First, the merchant argues that the betting system is not very complicated to learn, and therefore indicates that the E-learning course is

not necessary. Then he seems to excuse the fact that none of the employees have taken the E-learning course by blaming on their unwillingness.

Another post dealing with the issue of E-learning was posted the day before I came to visit the Supermarket the first time in October 2011, when I held interviews about the E-learning program in the Company (see chapter 2). The following extract shows a note from the merchant in which he informs the employees about my visit and asks for feedback about the E-learning program.

Extract 3

Hei folkens. Jeg skal ha ei jente på besøk i morra. Hun skal evaluere (butikk-kjeden) sitt e-læringsprogram er. Av 500 butikker var jeg selvfølgelig en av 8 som skulle bli med på det prosjektet. Jeg vet at "male employee", "female employee" og "female employee" har gjennomført dette. Er det noen flere som har gjort dette si i fra. Det var de små dvergene som hoppet rundt som eventyrfigurer og fortalte om kassarutiner, tipperutiner hvordan betale med kort og kontant, hvordan (butikkene) var bygd opp osv. Jeg trenger virkelig noen tilbakemeldinger om hvordan dette var. Vær dønn ærlige. Jeg hatet de små alvene. Lærte dere noe av det? Likte dere hvordan de små trolla sto og forklarte. Hva ville dere gjort annerledes? Tenk på hva dere tenkte når dere måtte sitte foran pc'n og trykke. Anbefaler dere at nye ansatte bruker dette? Gi meg gjerne kommentarer så fort som mulig. På forhånd takk

Comment from female employee: *Tror ikke jeg har hørt om det engang, hva er det her fornoe?*

In the extract the merchant is clearly sarcastic about the *Introductory course* (appendix 2) referring to the little helper as a fairytale figure. He asks the employees how they experience the E-learning course and encourages them to be honest. Then he honestly states that he hated those tiny figures and asks whether the employees enjoyed the little "trolls". The merchant obviously expresses a negative attitude towards the E-learning course and seems to ask the employees leading questions. Moreover, the only comment is from a female employee who appears to be curious about the concept of E-learning without getting any response. This confusedness and lack of response from the employees indicates a lack of awareness and focus on E-learning in the Supermarket.

The following extract from the interview data confirms the merchant's dissatisfaction with the current E-learning program. The extract shows a part of a conversation with the merchant concerning his use of the Facebook group compared to the *Introductory course*.

Extract 4

(...) hvis det hadde blitt altfor mye (informasjon) så hadde ikke folk giddi å lest det. Det er jo også tanken bak hvorfor jeg skriver litt køddent innimellom også, at dem på 17 og 18 skal gidde og lese det også. Så.. jeg tror måten man skriver budskapet på... sånn som e-læringskurset da, det er laget av et menneske som er mye eldre enn det som er gjennomsnittet av de som jobber i butikk. Det reflekterer litt hvordan e-læringskurset er lagt opp også. Det er en kjedelig stemme, det er helt korrekt innhold, det har jeg ikke noe å si på, men budskapet blir jævlig kjedelig. (...)

In the extract the merchant claims that he attempts to limit the amount of information as well as using humor in his weekly updates posted on the Facebook group, especially for the sake of the younger employees. He believes that they do not bother to read long and tedious notes. Further the merchant points out that the designers of the E-learning courses are much older than the average employee working in the supermarkets. This affects the design of the course, he claims, in terms of a boring voice and a boring message. The extract indicates that the merchant finds the E-learning courses boring and irrelevant for younger employees. He consciously attempts to do the opposite when he writes the weekly updates on the Facebook group, by using humor and providing limited amount of information.

How do the employees experience E-learning and the specific E-learning courses in the Supermarket? Do they seem to be unwilling to carry out E-learning, like the merchant states? The two extracts below show a conversation about E-learning with female employee 2 and the male employee. As mentioned in the introduction, it turned out in the interview with female employee 2 that she had not completed E-learning. The following extract shows a conversation about her impression of E-learning.

Extract 5

Interviewer: *Har du hørt om e-læringskurs?*

Female employee 2: *Jeg har hørt om det. Det har jeg.*

Interviewer: *Men du har ikke sett på noen av kursene?*

Female employee 2: *Jeg har ikke sett på de, men jeg er nysgjerrig på hvordan.. hva det innebærer da.*

(Jeg forteller litt om hva det dreier seg om og gir noen eksempler)

(...) Da går man inn på (nettsiden til butikk-kjeden) og logger seg inn via en læringsportal og kan ta det der.

Female employee 2: *Åja, da kan jeg jo gjøre det (ler) egentlig.*

Interviewer: *Du har kanskje ikke fått så mye info om det av kjøpmannen?*

Female employee 2: *Nei jeg har ikke det egentlig. Det er jo noe jeg eventuelt kunne sjekka opp selv og, tatt initiativ til.*

Interviewer: *Du har kanskje nok opplæring fra før, så du har kanskje ikke behov eller?*

Female employee 2: *Nei, altså jeg føler jo at det er en hemning at jeg ikke kan ta tippinga hvis jeg står i kassa og det står noen der og jeg har ingenting annet å gjøre, så føler jeg meg litt dum når jeg må få noen andre til å komme. Da kunne jeg jo tatt det, i stedet for å la kunden vente. Det syns jeg er kjempedumt.*

(...)

Interviewer: *Tror du sånne kurs (e-læringskurs) hadde vært nyttig?*

Female employee 2: *Jeg tror det hadde vært veldig nyttig. Jeg tror det hadde hjulpet veldig mye egentlig. Sånn som situasjonen er nå.*

Interviewer: *Hvordan da?*

Female employee 2: *Altså, da hadde jeg vært en ny ressurs for butikken. JEG kan ekspedere kunder som trenger tipping, uten at jeg må plinge på noen andre som kanskje er opptatt med noen andre igjen. Jo flere som kan, jo flere muligheter har du til å få ting gjort unna da. Og behandle flere på en gang.*

Interviewer: *Da får (kjøpmannen) gi deg litt mer informasjon om e-læringskursene, for det er bare å gå inn på nettet og ta det.*

Female employee 2: *Ja, men det kan jeg sikkert bare gjøre selv og. (humrer).*

Interviewer: *Men hadde du vært villig til å gjøre det hjemme?*

Female employee 2: *Ja det hadde jeg. Fordi jeg vil ha det best mulig på jobben min og uansett om kunder er sure eller blide på meg så vil jeg at dem skal få den servicen de trenger. Sånn er jeg bare. (humrer).*

In the extract female employee 2 expresses that she has not completed any E-learning courses, but she is curious. Further, she has not received much information about E-learning. For instance, she did not know the opportunity of logging into the LMS in order to carry out courses. At the same time, it appears that she has a need for further training on the betting system in the check out and she feels inhibited and stupid when she is forced to ask other employees for help while the customer is waiting. She finds E-learning useful in order to learn how to handle the betting system and avoid calling for other workers that are busy doing their own job. She claims that she is willing to carry out E-learning courses at home so that she can provide good service for the customers. The following extract shows a conversation with the male employee concerning the E-learning course supplied by *Norsk Tipping* as well as his experience of E-learning on a general basis.

Extract 6

Interviewer: *Hva synes du om de e-læringskursene i seg selv, syns du det er et nyttig verktøy?*

Male employee: *Ja det er jo det. Da slipper man å gå på kurs da for eksempel. Så det er nyttig. Både for sjef og ansatte.*

(...)

Interviewer: *Så du synes det er nyttig ift opplæring ved siden av vanlig praktisk opplæring?*

Male employee: *Yes.*

Interviewer: *Det er nødvendig?*

(tenker litt). Jeg vet ikke om det er NØDVENDIG, for du lærer jo egentlig det samme i praktisk arbeid her da, syns jeg. Det er lissom det samma.

Interviewer: *Så egentlig hadde du ikke behøvd de kursene?*

(tenker litt) Jeg syns egentlig ikke det. Etter min mening.

Interviewer: *Hvorfor ikke det?*

For.. for eksempel har jeg sitti i kassa et par ganger, og da tar vi det lissom underveis da, hvis det kommer opp no. Og da gjør jeg det om og om igjen for det kommer jo nye kunder som skal gjøre det samma hele tida. For eksempel ta ut 200 over, og sånn. Og jeg i hvert fall syns det går mye lettere inn å gjøre det praktisk enn å sitte å høre på åssen du skal gjøre det eller lese åssen du skal gjøre det. Så derfor syns jeg det er bedre med praktisk opplæring.

(...)

Interviewer: *(Viser til post 1, appendix 4) Her har han lagt ut en link til tippetorget.no. Vet ikke om du har sett det.*

Male employee: *Ja jeg husker at han la det ut, men jeg føler at jeg har ganske god kontroll på tippekassa egentlig.*

Interviewer: *Men hvis du ikke hadde hatt det, hadde du gått inn og tatt kurset?*

Male employee: *Jaja, for all del.*

Interviewer: *Selv om du var hjemme?*

Male employee: *Det hadde jeg gjort med en gang. Hvis jeg hadde vært ny her da også, det er som regel lagergutta som tar tippekassa eller tippinga da, og da ville jeg jo kommet forberedt lissom, sånn at jeg ikke står der i 10 min og prøver å finne fram. Så da er det veldig nyttig.*

According to the extract, the male employee finds E-learning useful because of the absence of external training courses. When I ask if he finds E-learning necessary, however, he hesitates and claims that they learn about the same issues in their practical training in the supermarket. He explains further that he learns a lot by doing the job and repeating the work tasks. He acquires the knowledge much easier by doing practical training rather than by listening or reading about how to do it. Hence, he prefers practical training rather than E-learning and other theoretical training. Later in the interview, I show him the screen shot of the link to the E-learning course about the betting system (appendix 4). He explains that he did not carry out the betting course because he feels rather confident using the betting system. He claims,

however, that if he were a new employee he would have used the link immediately for the sake of the learning and in order to be prepared at work.

In sum, the merchant claims that he uses the Facebook group for information sharing but not for training. The current training appears to be practical training in the supermarket in which an experienced employee trains the new employee. Correspondingly, the Facebook data shows that a limited amount of the posts are linked to E-learning. The merchant casts no doubt that he dislikes the E-learning courses. Also, his behavior regarding the E-learning course supplied by *Norsk Tipping* indicates that he is not an active user of E-learning in general. Further, it seems like the merchant attempts to excuse the fact that none of his employees have carried out the betting course by blaming on their unwillingness and laziness. The employees on the other hand, especially the female employees, find E-learning courses useful in order to perform a good job, and they say they are willing to carry out E-learning at home for the sake of learning. The male employee says, however, that E-learning is not necessary because they can learn the same during practical training on the job. Overall, the interview data indicates a need for further training among the employees, especially regarding the betting system, which is non-trivial to use.

6.2.2 Information sharing

The data collected from the Facebook group shows that the most dominant posts contain weekly updates from the merchant, which include a variety of information regarding work. In the following extract from the interview data the merchant explains his intention of creating the Facebook group.

Extract 7

Merchant: *Altså, man løper rundt, og man har la oss si 20 ting man skal gjøre på en gang. Du sjonglerer mange baller på en gang. Og samtidig skal du ta å prøve å få gitt informasjon oppi dette her. Og informasjon, det kommer på mail hele tida, altså du har vel en 30, 40 mail i løpet av en dag som ramler inn i fra øst og vest, det ramler inn på telefon og det er sånn, ikke sant?*

Interviewer: *Ja.*

Merchant: *Så skal du prøve å formidle det der videre, for det hjelper ikke en dritt hvis jeg kan det alene holdt jeg på å si. Hvis det er 17 stykker som ikke kan det ellers. Og det var liksom tanken rundt det her, at .. eh. Som du sikkert har sett også så er det*

klipp og lim på mailer som jeg har fått for eksempel fra (ledelsen) da eller andre butikker hvor det har vært tyverier og sånn, bare punsje dette her. Da slipper jeg å printe ut dette her og henge det opp på personalrommet, og spørre: Har du sett dette her? Så, det har jo egentlig gjort det enklere sånn sett.

(...)

Merchant: *Altså, hver måned har vi et tema da, Tex Mex har jeg vel skrevet om. Eh.. kjøttdeig har jeg skrevet om. Jeg har tatt og vist bilder av forskjellige middagsretter. Dem har visst hva det skal være for no, visst hvilke temaer vi har, eller HÅPER i hvert fall at dem har fått det med seg. Det hjelper ikke at jeg vet at vi har et tema alene, men hvis alle andre rundt meg også vet det og vet hva vi skal fokusere på og hva vi skal gjøre for no, så er det mye enklere å ro robåten hvis vi er 17 enn hvis jeg er alene.*

In the extract the merchant points out his busy working days and the high amount of information as the motivators for creating the Facebook group. The more informed the employees are, the better the merchant is able to offload his work. Metaphorically speaking, he says that rowing the boat with 17 people is easier than rowing it alone. Hence, by the use of Facebook the merchant aims to share significant information with his employees with the effect of an easier and more beneficial everyday working life for him. The following extract from the Facebook data shows a typical weekly update posted by the merchant on July 2, a few weeks after the creation of the group. The second image in appendix 4 shows a screen shot of this post.

Extract 8

Hei Folkens.

Fra og med denne uken har jeg tenkt til å benytte denne siden mer aktivt. Jeg vil fremover skrive kort hvordan det går i butikken, hva vi skal annonsere og andre ting vi skal ha fokus på fremover. Kall det gjerne en ukesoppdatering. Først og fremst vil jeg si at jeg er ferdig med telling for første halvår. Vi kom bra ut av det og klarte god lønnsomhet. For å holde lønnsomheten oppe er det noen områder som krever større fokus enn andre. Blant annet lavt svinn på frukt, brød og kjølevarer. Rutinene er på plass på og vi kan fokusere videre på andre ting. Fra 21. juni gikk prisen på bæreposer opp med 10 øre. Det er ikke mye, men det selges mange bæreposer og jo flere vi gir bort, dess mer "kaster" vi i søpla. Det selges faktisk så mange bæreposer hver eneste dag at det utgjør 1/6 av overskuddet i butikk. Gir vi bort halvparten har vi nesten gitt bort 10 % av overskuddet. Det er viktig å holde fokus på en lønnsom butikk. Allerede neste år skal butiken gjøres om, noe som koster MYE penger. Tjener vi ikke penger har vi heller ikke råd til å oppgradere butikken. Da taper vi både kunder og penger. Vi er godt i gang med ny søknad om ny innkjøring og beninpumpe på butikken. Det er under behandling i kommunen, men ser ut til å gå igjennom. Det vil da bli lettere å kjøre inn på parkeringsplassen og kanskje enda flere finner veien inn til oss. Helgens store stunt har vært jordbær. Det har gått over alle støvelskaff. Vi har

hatt all time high på salget. Vi kommer til å passere over 1000 solgte kruver torsdag til og med lørdag. Det er moro at slike tilbud slår til skikkelig. At vi får nok varer og at kundene er fornøyde med kvaliteten. Slike aktiviteter gjør at kundene blir fornøyde og kommer igjen. Neste uke starter en ny runde av "under 100 lappen". Ny vri. Det blir et sommerlig preg på det hele. Det er 5 alternative handlelister til "alle" anledninger. "Picnic til under hundrelappen", "biltur til under 100 lappen", "tur på brygga..", "Gråværsdag" og "strandtur til under 100 lappen" Skal se om jeg greier å legge ut fila så dere får alle se hva som skjer. Hver uke fremover skal jeg også legge ut de viktigste tilbudene i frukt Det vil i uke 27 være Blåbær: 19 kr Plommer: 15 kr Hel vannmelon: 8 kr kg. NB: alle tilbud i frukt gjelder fra tirsdag til tirsdag

In the extract the merchant introduces the concept of weekly updates in which he will inform about important issues concerning the supermarket. In the post he seems to focus on work routines and keeping a low wastage in order to achieve and maintain high profit. By giving a specific example he illustrates that simple actions at work may lead to significant improvements for the business. Further, he informs about the weekly offers and the summer campaigns in the supermarket. The post is a typical weekly update in which the merchant shares information with the employees about the business revenue, work routines, current offers and campaigns.

Considering that Facebook is defined as “a social utility that connects people” (Facebook), I was concerned about the degree of mutual interaction among the members of the Facebook group. In the virtual ethnography I found that the degree of interaction turns out to be comments and “likes” as well as whether it is a balanced activity between the users, or between the employees and the merchant. According to the Facebook data, the employees do not seem to be as active as the merchant and several of his posts are not responded to. It thus seems to be an imbalance in the interaction between the employees and the merchant. With this in mind during the interview with the merchant, I ask about his expectations regarding the activity from the employees, and about his view on the potential of Facebook as a platform for discussion. The following extract shows a conversation with the merchant about the mentioned issues.

Extract 9

Interviewer: *Hva slags forventninger hadde du til aktivitet på Facebook-gruppa?*

Merchant: *Jeg forventer at det blir lest men jeg forventer ikke at alle trykker "like" eller alle skal trykke kommentarer eller noe sånt no. Men jeg spør.. jeg hakke gididi og sagt det at "trykk på like så ser jeg at dere har lest det". Men jeg spør dem innimellom om et par ting som jeg har skrevet, for å høre om dem leser detta her. Så det kan jo hende at mine forventninger er helt feil, at dem skummer og ikke leser det. Men jeg liker å tro at dem gjør det.*

(...)

Interviewer: *Har du tenkt noe på å bruke Facebook-siden til å diskutere ting eller lage diskusjoner?*

Merchant: *Jeg har sagt at dem kan skrive hva dem vil der, dem kan få lov til å bytte vakter inn på der og styre og ordne.. Men jeg har aldri gididi å starta no.. jeg har aldri vært noe sånn typ han som skal holde ordet der, eller holde diskusjoner inn på der, det har jeg ikke jeg gjort. Jeg vet ikke om egentlig hverdagen er sånn hos oss heller jeg. Om det er så mye diskusjoner. Altså, det er mye rutinepreg i en matbutikk. Du kan egentlig sette uka på et lite A4-ark.*

Interviewer: *Det er liksom et fasitsvar, sånn skal det være?*

Merchant: *Ehm.. Nei, det er det ikke. Men ramma rundt det er et fasitsvar. Rutinene som skal gjøres i kassa er enkelt og greit. Rutinene som skal gjøres på golv er enkelt og greit.*

According to the extract, the merchant expects that the employees read the posts on the Facebook group, but he neither expects nor asks them to push the "like" button or comment. He claims, however, that he asks them from time to time about some of the issues he write about in order to check if they have read it. Apparently they seem to be updated. Hence, despite the fact that several of the posts are not responded to, the merchant has the impression that the employees read the posts and are updated. Further in the extract, the merchant questions the relevance of having discussions on the Facebook group, considering that the work tasks in the Supermarket are largely characterized by routines. Hence, the routine-based work seems to inhibit the merchant's arrangement of discussions on the Facebook group.

In line with this, extract 8 indicates that the majority of the weekly updates include information and instructions without any questions to the employees. Also, the majority of the weekly updates include a small degree of or no response from the employees. Hence, the interview data as well as the Facebook data seems to indicate a dominance of one-way communication from the merchant, partly a request of the type of work that is well defined.

Now, what do the employees feel about having discussions on the Facebook group? The next two extracts show conversations with female employee 1 and 2.

Extract 10

Interviewer: *Tror du det kan være lurt å ha diskusjoner der inne på den siden?*

Female employee 1: *Jeg vet ikke.. ikke store diskusjoner. Det ville jeg ikke.. ville ikke sagt det. Jeg syns det er viktig at, når man skal ha en diskusjon, at man snakker sammen ansikt til ansikt.*

Interviewer: *På personalmøte for eksempel?*

Female employee 1: *Ja. Nå er det faktisk veldig veldig lenge siden vi har hatt personalmøte, så det burde vi egentlig ha når jeg tenker meg om. (humrer) Nå har det blitt så mye Facebook vettu, så nå er det lissom ikke.. vi hadde hatt det på kjempelenge.*

Extract 11

Interviewer: *Hva med å ha sånne diskusjoner på Facebook-siden da? Har du tenkt noe på det?*

Female employee 2: *Altså, alle diskusjoner over internett er veldig lett å misforstå, at vi misforstår hverandre fordi du kommuniserer liksom.. du ser ikke personen, du ser ikke ansiktsuttrykk osv så det hadde bare blitt masse krangling.*

Interviewer: *Krangling?*

Female employee 2: *(Humrer). Ja, det er det jeg har av erfaring ut i fra sånne diskusjoner over nett. Det er bare, alle misforstår hverandre og du får ikke uttrykt .. når du skal diskutere med andre så har du måter å uttrykke deg på. De uttrykkene kan du ikke.. du klarer ikke å få uttrykt de over nettet.. det handler liksom om hvordan du oppfører deg og kroppsspråket.*

Interviewer: *Så du tror ikke den Facebook-gruppa er så nyttig ift å diskutere ting og ha debatter?*

Female employee 2: *Altså, du kan godt diskutere ting og ha debatter men jeg tror det vil bli veldig mange misforståelser. Og da er de bedre hvis man avtaler et møte der og kan ta det face to face for det .. eller så tror jeg det ville godt over flere timer eller flere sider på den gruppa. (humrer)*

The extracts show that both female employee 1 and 2 doubt the potential of having discussions on the Facebook group. They highlight the importance of having discussions face to face, for instance at staff meetings. Female employee 2 claims that discussions on the Internet may easily lead to misunderstandings due to the lack of body language and facial expressions. Based on personal experiences she also finds that discussions on Facebook may lead to dispute or conflicts. She thus finds it more appropriate to arrange physical meetings for discussions.

In sum, the interview data as well as the Facebook data seems to indicate a dominance of one-way communication from the merchant in which he shares all kinds of information of

relevance to the daily work in the Supermarket. Moreover, the merchant questions the relevance of having discussions on the Facebook group, considering that the work tasks are largely characterized by routines. Similar, the employees also seem to doubt the usefulness of having discussions on Facebook. They highlight the importance of having discussions face to face, in order to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts, and to have access to each others' facial expression and body language.

6.2.3 Learning at work

How do the employees experience the Facebook group and the weekly updates? Do they find the information useful and do they experience any learning? The following extract from the interview shows a conversation with female employee 1 about her experience of the Facebook group.

Extract 12

Interviewer: *Tenkte å snakke litt om Facebook-gruppa. Jeg lurar på hvordan du opplever den gruppa?*

Female employee 1: *Eh.. jeg syns den gruppa er genial jeg. Jeg liker'n kjempegodt. I stedet for å ha personalmøte hele tiden da.. det blir liksom som et personalmøte der inne. Man kan alltid, hvis man kommer på noe der og da så er det vanskelig å huske på det til neste gang man skal ta opp noe med jobben og sånn. Man kan skrive det inn der også kan alle se det, og alle kan kommentere og man kan både vise bilder og skrive.. "kan du jobbe for meg? Kan du gjøre ditt, kan du hjelpe meg det, kan du huske på det, være forsiktig med det?" Det er liksom, alt mulig liksom. Jeg syns det er kjempesmart.*

(...)

Interviewer: *Lærer du noe annet på den siden?*

Female employee 1: *Hm.. jeg lærer vel ikke så veldig mye, det er vel mest informasjonsside. Men noe lærer jeg jo. Det er noen ganger han skriver noe jeg ikke helt skjønner, men da går det jo alltid an å spørre da. Da kan du skrive der hvis du ikke skjønner eller så kan du spørre (kjøpmannen) på jobben. Han er jo her neste hele tiden, så det er ikke vanskelig å få snakka med han heller, hvis du er på jobb. Men det kan være i andre butikker, så kan det være lurt å ha en sånn side da.*

Interviewer: *Men hva er det du lærer hvis du lærer noe?*

Female employee 1: *(ler) Vanskelig spørsmål. Hva jeg lærer hvis jeg lærer noe? Åh. Det var vanskelige spørsmål (ler). Ehm..*

In the extract female employee 1 says that she finds the Facebook group excellent in order to post messages, photos and share all kinds of information. She characterizes the use of the group as having staff meetings online, and she seems to value the effectiveness of posting messages on the spot. For instance, when she has something on her mind she can post a message immediately rather than have to keep it in her memory. When I ask if she experiences any learning, however, she doubts it and finds it hard to identify what she learns. She rather focuses on the usefulness of Facebook in relation to information sharing. The next extract from the interview shows a conversation with the male employee about his experience of the Facebook group regarding usefulness and learning.

Extract 13

Interviewer: *Hva synes du om den Facebook-gruppa deres da?*

Male employee: *Veldig interessant. Når (kjøpmannen) kommer med innspill på åssen det har gått her den siste måneden for eksempel, siste uka, overskuddet, tilbud og sånn. Egentlig veldig interessant å følge med litt.*

(...)

Interviewer: *Men lærer du noe av den siden?*

Male employee: *(tenker). Jeg vil ikke akkurat si at jeg lærer så veldig mye men jeg får jo informasjon om åssen det går i butikken og.. for eksempel tilbud som er lurt å vite om.*

In the extract the male employee says that he experiences the Facebook group as interesting. He finds it useful to read the information about the revenue and the weekly offers posted by the merchant. In line with female employee 1, however, he also doubts its value as a learning tool and rather highlights the access to general information.

In general, it seems like the employees find the Facebook group useful as a platform for information sharing. However, when I ask if they experience any learning with it both female employee 1 and the male employee hesitate and doubt it. They do not experience learning as such but rather focus on its usefulness for information sharing. In other words, they do not seem to experience information sharing as learning but they do find it useful in order to be updated at work. In line with this and according to extract 1, the merchant clearly underlines that he applies the Facebook group for information sharing and as a form of competence development but not in relation to training. Apparently, learning does not seem to be

connected to information sharing but seems to be exclusively linked to training. Hence, the informants seem to make a clear distinction between information sharing and the Facebook group on the one side and learning and training on the other side.

6.2.4 Pocket notes

As mentioned in the introduction, the merchant has made memory notes (appendix 5) for the employees to use during work. In the following extract from the interview, the merchant tells about the memory notes as well as the potential outcome of using the Facebook group.

Extract 14

Merchant: (...) *Jeg tror jeg viste deg den lille lappen jeg har med sånn ukesrutiner forrige uke, som alle har fått av meg, en liten laminert lapp...*

Interviewer: *Ja jeg har lest om den.*

Merchant: *Ja. Der står det hva som skal gjøres, det er en for lagergutt og en for kassadama. Og der står det også hva som kan gjøres ekstra for, for eksempel kasserere i løpet av uka. Og mye av det funker, eller mesteparten funker.. (tlf ringer)... (Pause i lydopptak).*

Interviewer: *Ja de små lappene...*

(Kjøpmannen går og henter lappene med rutiner).

Merchant: *Også har vi en enkel en for kassererne, altså du kan si tre ting til et menneske også har dem glemt en ting, sier du ti ting så går det til helvete.. er oppfatninga. Tidligere så hadde jeg mye av dette her i huet sjølv og delegerte en ting av gangen. Det var når jeg jobba til kl ti hver kveld sjølv. Det gidder jeg ikke lenger. Så da har vi absolutt minimum av rutiner som de på gølv skal gjøre også er det rutinene som dem i kassa skal gjøre, samtidig som hva man skal gjøre dem forskjellige dagene.*

Interviewer: *Tenkte på.. hvis du ser tilbake på den tiden før Facebook-gruppa ble laget. Har det skjedd noen endringer, noen synlige endringer i butikken?*

Merchant: *For min del, så har hverdagen min blitt enklere. Jeg slipper å være hønsemor og gjete dem som er her. Jeg syns dem er mye mer selvstendige nå. Nå har jeg et veldig bra team rundt meg her. Eh.. så hverdagen min har blitt mye enklere, det blir gjort mye mer ting. Samtidig så har jeg fått kutta lønnskostnadene med rundt 30 %. Det utgjør rundt 600 000 kr i året, i kutta kostnader. Og da blir det mer igjen på bønnlinja til meg og.. det er bra, det liker vi (hvisker og tar en slurk kaffe).*

Interviewer: *Så du har merka synlige forskjeller, endringer?*

Merchant: *Altså det er jo flere faktorer som ligger inni der da. Det er jo.. jeg kan ikke akkurat klorifisere en Facebook-gruppe jeg bruker en time i uka på. Eh.. men det er et ledd av rutinene som jeg har lagt inn... jeg syns den tingen der (peker på lappene med rutiner) som jeg bruker som en basis er like viktig som det jeg bruker på Facebook-gruppa. Altså, hvis dem tinga der blir gjort hver dag, for det første så blir jeg veldig*

positivt overraska.. eh, men det er ting som bør være i orden for at en butikk skal se innbydende ut.

In the extract the merchant tells about the memory notes, which the employees keep in their pockets during work shifts. The notes include separate work routines for the females working in the checkout counter and for the males dealing with the inventory (see appendix 5). The checkout-girls are primarily responsible to keep the area around the cash register clean, while the inventory-boys are responsible for receiving and filling in groceries as well as keeping the supermarket and inventory clean. Before he started to apply the memory notes as well as the Facebook group, the merchant delegated these tasks one by one during the work shifts. Now, with the use of memory notes and Facebook, the merchant experiences a much easier daily working life regarding work tasks. He claims that the employees have been more independent and he no longer needs to fuss about the work routines during work. The merchant points out that the Facebook group is not the only factor causing these changes and he also considers the pocket notes as an important factor.

How do the employees experience the daily working life now, compared to before the creation of the Facebook group? In the following extract from the interview with female employee 1, we talk about the usefulness and the potential consequences of the Facebook group.

Extract 15

Interviewer: *Hva syns du er mest nyttig?*

Female employee 1: *Jeg syns det er veldig nyttig at for eksempel (kjøpmannen) skriver opp hva som er ukens tilbud og sånne ting. For når man kommer på jobb en uke så er det ikke samme tilbud som forrige uke. Og når folk kommer på jobb så kan ikke han (kjøpmannen) komme bort til alle og si: "Husk på det tilbudet her og der". Men hvis vi leser det på søndag da, så vet vi at det er neste ukes tilbud og hva som foregår den uka der og.. og sånn var det ikke før så det syns jeg er kjempedeilig. For da føler jeg at jeg kan svare kundene ordentlig. Og.. kunne svare for meg da. For da vet jeg det, for jeg har lest gjennom. Mhm.*

Interviewer: *Men hvordan var det før, hvordan foregikk det da?*

Female employee 1: *Det var sånn..(ler) kom på jobb også bare: Ja men det har jeg sett i avisa at det er tilbud på". Også vet vi ikke det, også blir det sånn: "åh, beklager" (ler). Også har du kanskje slått inn feil også bruker du masse tid på det og slå det i retur. Og det kunne vi jo visst for lenge siden hadde vi bare hatt det sånn da. (...)*

Interviewer: *Jeg ser han (kjøpmannen) skriver en del om å holde rutiner og sånne ting.*

Female employee 1: *Ja. Det er jo viktig. Ehm. For det er jo veldig mye som skal gjøres i en butikk som kanskje ikke alle vet at vi gjør selv. Og da er det veldig mye å huske på. Han har jo prøvd alt stakkars, han skriver på Facebook, skriver sånne lapper som vi skal legge i lomma og.. ja det er mye å huske på. Men det er bra at han maser litt på det, for hvis det ser pent ut rundt oss så er det hyggeligere for kundene og oss selv å være på jobb. Så.. det er bra. Da pleier jeg å.. jeg vet ikke om jeg lærer noe av, men da husker jeg i hvert fall det da. Han er flink til å lissom minne oss på det. "Husk det nå da og vær flink til det" og..*

Interviewer: *Så dere har lapper i lomma med arbeidsoppgaver?*

Female employee 1: *Jeg trokke noen har dem nå lenger for det er en stund siden han lagde dem til oss.. (ler) men nå har vi dem på Face og da så nå ser vi lissom.. det var før vi fikk Facebook at vi fikk dem lappene tror jeg.*

Female employee 1 finds it highly useful that the merchant uses the Facebook group in order to inform about the weekly offers in the supermarket. In that way, the employees are aware of the offers and feel more secure when they receive questions from customers. She points out that before they started to apply the Facebook group the employees were not always aware of the offers in the beginning of the week. When customers asked questions they were not able to answer. It appears that the merchant did not use any concrete tools to inform his employees about the offers, but rather attempted to give the employees verbal messages at work. Further in the interview we talk about the work routines, which the merchant highlights in almost every weekly update. According to female employee 1, the employees have to remember a high amount of tasks and routines during work shifts, which the merchant constantly worries about. He informs and reminds them about the work routines on the Facebook group. Female employee 1 doubts that the employees still use the pocket notes, and claims that the same work routines now are available on Facebook. Hence, according to her, the Facebook group has replaced the role of the pocket notes.

7. Discussion

The data and analysis just presented constitutes a base for discussion. In this chapter I will discuss my findings in relation to some of the results from the pilot study (Ch. 2.2) and in light of the theoretical perspectives on social media and learning (Ch. 3). The structure of this chapter is based on my research questions, which aim to explore how learning takes place in the Supermarket. The specific research questions are:

1. How is (management initiated) training organized?
2. How are informal (worker initiated) learning processes occurring?
3. How is knowledge facilitated and with what means?

7.1 How is training organized?

The interview data indicates that the training in the Supermarket mainly consists of E-learning and practical training in the supermarket. These types of formal training will now be elaborated and discussed in light of current research.

7.1.1 Conventional E-learning

The Facebook data shows that a limited amount of the posts are linked to training. According to both the interview data and the Facebook data, the merchant casts no doubt that he dislikes the current E-learning courses in the Company (extract 3 and 4), and the awareness of E-learning appears to be low on the Facebook group. One of the few posts that are linked to E-learning contains a link to a course supplied by *Norsk Tipping* (the Betting course). According to the interview data, there seems to be a general need for further training among the employees, especially regarding the betting system (extract 2 and 5). Despite this need, none of the employees have completed this E-learning course. As shown in the previous chapter, the interview data indicates that the merchant expresses contradicting views of the lack of user activity. First, he seems to find it necessary to carry out the course in order to raise the level of skills among his employees. At the same time, he claims that if he wanted the employees to carry out the course he would have made it mandatory and ordered them to

complete it. He thus indicates passivity about the course due to his lack of encouragement. Secondly, the merchant claims that the betting system is not very complicated to learn, which indicates that the E-learning course is somewhat redundant. Simultaneously, he claims that the employees have a need to learn the new system but they do not bother to follow the link and carry out the course. The merchant points out that he himself learned a lot from the course (extract 2), which indicates that he finds the course useful. Hence, the betting course is judged to be relevant and useful, but it is not made mandatory.

According to the data and analysis above, the merchant finds it important that E-learning is mandatory in order for the employees to use it. However, mandatory use is not always the critical success factor for the adoption of E-learning. Grudin and Palen (1995) found that groupware systems in two large organizations succeeded without mandated use. The results of their study indicate that flexibility and ease of access are powerful motivators in discretionary use situations, i.e. voluntarily use of ICT systems. Critical success factors in their findings were ease of access, congenial functionality, flexibility, efficiency and social pressure. Hence, there might be other underlying factors to explain the low user activity for E-learning in the Supermarket. Mørch and Skaanes (2010) present data from a Norwegian project, in which a web-based learning portal was introduced in a petrol station division of an oil company. Before the introduction of the learning portal, the employees in the petrol station used various kinds of information-seeking methods, such as asking colleagues at work, paper based catalogues and staff meetings. The results from the study show that the learning portal was preferred by half of the users, while the other half still preferred the traditional kinds of methods. Hence, perhaps other types of training or learning methods are preferred in the Supermarket at the expense of E-learning?

The attitude of the merchant in the Supermarket appears to be similar to many of the merchants in the pilot study (Ch. 2.2). The study indicates some contradictions between the merchants on the one side and the employees on the other. The merchants report that the employees do not bother to complete E-learning courses, especially if they do not get paid for it. The employees, on the other hand, seem to be positive and interested in E-learning and several say that they are willing to carry out courses at home for the sake of the learning benefits. Furthermore, the pilot study indicates that time and costs are the most important challenges for the merchants and seem to be significant causes for the low E-learning activity.

At the same time, the majority of merchants, including the merchant in the Supermarket, believe that E-learning is an effective and useful training tool. In sum, the merchants find the *idea* of E-learning great, but experience that the *practice* of E-learning is challenging because of lack of time and high salary costs. Based on this, the ideal for the merchants is to let the employees carry out E-learning at home without salary.

Another contradiction in the data material is the lack of information about E-learning on the Facebook group and the merchant's claim that E-learning is a useful training tool. Similar, as mentioned above, the merchants in the pilot study find the idea of E-learning great, but they do not use it. These contradictions could be explained by the time and costs factors mentioned earlier, which can be associated with the *primary work activity* in the supermarkets. As mentioned in the introduction, primary work refers to the main tasks to be accomplished during work, while secondary work is directed towards training and learning (Mørch and Skaanes 2010). In the context of the supermarkets, the primary work activities appear to be the sale of groceries, which depends on sufficient manpower and groceries in stock. The E-learning courses, on the other hand, are a part of the secondary work activities. The lack of time and costs seem to force the merchants to make priorities in their daily working life. The E-learning courses are not required in order for the business to pull through, and might therefore have lower priority.

Mørch and Skaanes (2010) claim that web-based learning often competes with other forms of training methods, such as seminars and lectures. The other type of training in the Supermarket is practical training at work, which will be discussed in the next section.

7.1.2 Apprenticeship Learning

According to the interview data (extract 1), the typical training in the Supermarket appears to be practical training in how to carry out the daily work in which an experienced employee trains the new employee. The interview data indicates that the merchant and the male employee prefer this type of practical training rather than E-learning (extract 1 and 6). The merchant values this type of training because both the new employee and the trainer develop, and it is less frightening when the trainer is a peer rather than an old boss. The male employee

claims that E-learning is not necessary because he learns the same in practical training in the supermarket. He says that he learns more by doing and repeating the work, such as operating the cash register, than reading or hearing about it. Such practical training can be related to *apprenticeship learning* in which newcomers become socialized into a community of practice through legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger 1991), or guided participation (Rogoff 1990). In terms of cognitive apprenticeship (Collins 2006), the employees in the Supermarket are modeling other workers with more experience, and might observe, enact and practice the knowledge that they need to perform the work tasks. As will be discussed later, the employees in the Supermarket receive a large amount of information that they need to do the job (extract 15). Cognitive apprenticeship learning might therefore be an appropriate learning strategy in the Supermarket, in order for the employees to remember the huge amount of information.

7.1.3 Comparing E-learning and Apprenticeship Learning

As pointed out in chapter 2, the current E-learning courses in the supermarkets are primarily characterized by delivery of pre-determined (fixed) content. They mainly contain instructions supplemented with interactive sessions between the user and the computer. The E-learning courses thus function as tools for instruction and content delivery, and can relate to the Broadcast view of E-learning outlined by Weller (2007). The broadcast view considers the Internet as a tool for content delivery and is inspired by the *acquisition* metaphor for learning, outlined by Sfard (1998). This learning perspective considers the human mind as a container to be filled with already established knowledge. The underlying principles of Web 1.0 technologies (O'Reilly 2005) seem to have been influenced by a similar learning perspective. On the other hand, the apprenticeship learning in the Supermarket facilitates social interaction, learning by doing and collaboration, and may therefore be related to the *participation* metaphor for learning, as opposed to the acquisition metaphor (Sfard 1998). The participation metaphor considers learning as something you *do* rather than something you *have*. The underlying principles of Web 2.0 technologies (O'Reilly 2005) seem to have been influenced by this social aspect of learning and action.

The distinction between E-learning and apprenticeship learning can also be related to formal and informal aspects of learning (Malcolm et. al 2003; Brown & Duguid 1991). The E-learning courses are provided from the management in the Company based on clear learning objectives and content, and might therefore relate to canonical practice (Brown & Duguid 1991) and formal learning (Malcolm et. al 2003). The apprenticeship learning, on the other hand, is more related to informal learning processes through mutual interactions and open-ended learning, sometimes initiated by the learner itself (Malcolm et. al 2003). Through apprenticeship learning in the Supermarket, the new employees are free to ask questions and perform tasks in the context of real problems at work. The learning objectives in such training are not necessarily pre-determined, and the learning content is more accidental than the content in the E-learning courses. A further discussion of informal learning processes in the Supermarket will be illuminated in the next section.

7.2 How is the informal learning taking place?

The Facebook data and the interview data indicate that the Facebook group functions as a platform for information sharing between the merchant and the employees. Information sharing is in this thesis considered as informal learning, because it usually contains open-ended learning without specific objectives and content, and is often initiated by the learners themselves (Malcolm et. al 2003). This section includes a discussion about how the information sharing takes place in the Supermarket.

7.2.1 Information sharing

The interview data indicates that by the use of Facebook the merchant aims to share significant information with his employees with the effect of an easier and more rewarding everyday working life for him (extract 7). The Facebook data indicates that the merchant is responsible for the majority of posts on the Facebook group in which he shares information about the business revenue, work routines, current offers, campaigns and more (extract 8). The employees, on the other hand, are not as active as the merchant. It thus seems to be an imbalance in the interaction between the employees and the merchant. According to the interview data, the merchant expects that the employees read the posts on the Facebook

group, but he neither expects nor asks them to push the “like” button or comment them (extract 9). Further, the merchant seems to question the relevance of having discussions on the Facebook group, considering that the work tasks in the Supermarket are largely based on routines. He claims that the work routines are predefined, clear and not really negotiable and therefore inhibit the need and relevance for discussions. Similar, the employees also seem to question and doubt the relevance of having discussions on the Facebook group (extract 10 & 11). They rather highlight the importance of having discussions face to face, for instance at staff meetings. Furthermore, the majority of the weekly updates seem to include generally useful information and instructions, but the merchant is not asking for questions or action from the employees. Also, the majority of the weekly updates include few or no comments from the employees. Hence, it appears to be a one-way communication directed from the merchant to the employees.

Based on the findings above, the Facebook group is dominated by information delivery from the merchant, rather than open-ended discussions about work-related issues. Hence, the group seems to function as a platform for information delivery and one-way communication, rather than discussion and two-way communication. This tension appears to be in line with the E-learning debate outlined by Weller (2007) between the Broadcast view and the Discussion view, followed by the distinction between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 (O’Reilly 2005). As mentioned in the first section, the broadcast view considers the Internet as a tool for content delivery and can be explained by the acquisition metaphor (Sfard 1998). The discussion view rather considers the Internet as a tool for discussion and social interaction between the users, and can be explained by the participation metaphor (Sfard 1998).

Kitsantas & Dabbagh (2011) refer to Facebook as a social network site based on Web 2.0 in which users share experiences and information as well as communicate with each other. Further, the definition outlined by Facebook also underlines the social aspect of Facebook in which the users can interact through common activities, share information and participate in various types of networks. Hence, the underlying principles of Facebook and Web 2.0 technologies are closely linked to *Networked learning* (Goodyear et. al 2004) and *Computer-Supported-Collaborative-Learning (CSCL)* (Stahl et.al 2006), which in turn are based on a *Sociocultural learning perspective* (Wertsch 1991, Kozulin et. al. 2003). This perspective considers learning as a social process and mediated through cultural tools such as language or

computers. In a sociocultural perspective, the users of Facebook have the technological tools for joint meaning making, collaborative knowledge creation as well as sharing of content and experiences. Also, the users are free to decide and control the content that they want to share with each other. However, despite the potential of Facebook as a Web 2.0 tool, the findings above indicate that the Facebook group mainly functioned as a Web 1.0 tool in which the merchant delivers information and instructions for the employees to follow.

What kind of information is shared through the Facebook group and in the Supermarket in general? The next sections illuminate how the information is relevant and useful for the employees at work.

7.3 How is knowledge facilitated and by what means?

The data collected from the interviews, the Facebook group and the pocket notes indicate that the information flow in the Supermarket mainly concerns work routines and customer requests. How is this knowledge supported in the Supermarket and by what means?

7.3.1 Work routines and customer requests

According to the Facebook data, the information on the Facebook group covers work routines, offers and campaigns in the supermarket, information about revenue, some relevant news feeds and external information as well as knowledge about groceries and products. Beside the Facebook group, the merchant also applies memory notes for the employees to keep in their pockets during work (appendix 5). According to female employee 1, the employees must remember a large amount of information for tasks and routines during work shifts (extract 15). The merchant constantly worries about the work routines, especially about holding the supermarket clean and tidy. Before the merchant started to use Facebook and the pocket notes, he gave the employees verbal messages during work. Now, with the use of Facebook and pocket notes as tools for information sharing, he experience a much easier daily working life (extract 14). He claims that the employees have been more independent and he no longer needs to bother them about the work routines during the work shifts. According to the interview data, the employees find it especially useful when the merchant informs about the weekly offers on the Facebook group (extract 15). In that way, the employees are

informed and feel more secure when they are in contact with customers. According to the Facebook data, the merchant says little about customer service, i.e. how to treat customers and how to face their requests. On the other hand, the interview data indicates that the employees highlight these issues, because they interact with the customers everyday. They seem to have a need for certain knowledge in order to face customer requests at hand.

Information in the way just presented can be explained by the concept of *knowledge in the world* (Norman 2001). Knowledge in the world is explicit and can easily be coded, articulated and transferred to others. *Knowledge in the head*, on the other hand, is what we know instinctively and what comes naturally, and may be difficult to describe or teach. Knowledge in the world, such as written memory notes, signs, desk calendars or electronic alarm clocks, can function as reminders in order to complete tasks (Norman 2001). The pocket notes (appendix 5) are prime examples of knowledge in the world. This type of knowledge does not require memorizing and learning because the information is available in the world and sometimes at hand, as with the pocket notes. However, the efficiency might decrease by the time it takes to search for and interpret the external information. Knowledge in the head, on the other hand, requires considerable amounts of learning rather than search and interpretation of the environment. Considering that the information and following tasks has been internalized and automated, the knowledge in the head is often more efficient in use. The acquisition metaphor for learning (Sfard 1998) mentioned earlier, seems to be based on modeling knowledge in the head, while participation metaphor supports interaction or mediation with knowledge in the world.

In order for the employees to use the explicit knowledge on Facebook at work, they might bring certain tools that function as reminders. They can use the pocket notes in order to recall the work routines on the spot, or they can look at the Facebook group on mobile devices in order to recall the huge amount of information available there. Such tools are portable and will therefore support situated learning (Lave & Wenger 1991) when the information is made ready to hand, and learning on demand (Fischer 2000). However, because of the huge amount of information on the Facebook group, it might take time to search for the exact information that the employees are looking for at work. They might need certain information at a particular point in time, for instance when serving a customer. If the employees have internalized this information in their head, or if the information is at arm's reach or accessible

by a few mouse clicks, they will be able to give faster answers to customer requests. Hence, the Facebook group and the pocket notes might function as temporary tools in order for the employees to internalize the knowledge in the world into their heads (Norman 2001).

According to Norman, the only way of internalizing the knowledge into the head is through practice. Apprenticeship learning, as mentioned before, might be an appropriate learning strategy beside the Facebook group and the pocket notes, for translating knowledge in the world into knowledge in the head (i.e. internalization).

As mentioned earlier, Web 2.0 technologies such as Facebook are more aligned with a sociocultural learning perspective than the individual-oriented E-learning courses provided by the Company. Facebook therefore seems to facilitate the interpretation and construction of knowledge through social interactions and mediated artifacts. Considering that the users are free to decide, interpret and use the content on their own ways, Facebook as a technology supports the concept of *lifelong learning*, outlined by Fischer (2000). Such learning involves using knowledge in the context of self-directed problems. In the terms of Fischer, Facebook may “*provide the opportunity and resources for engaging in meaningful activity, for social debate and discussion, for creating shared understanding among stakeholders, and for framing and solving authentic problems*” (Fischer 2000: 9). In this form, Facebook can support situated learning (Lave & Wenger 1991) and learning on demand (Fischer 2000).

However, these are claims, which do not have sufficient evidence and they indicate areas for more research. In the context of the Facebook group in the Supermarket, however, the group appears to function as a Web 1.0 technology, as mentioned earlier. Most of the information on the Facebook group is pre-determined by the merchant, and his goal is to share information for the employees to use in problem solving at work. In other words, the Facebook group appears to facilitate storing and retrieval of knowledge in the world (Norman 2001). The technology of Facebook, on the other hand, provides the opportunity for the employees to share their own meanings on the group. They might interpret and use the information in different ways in order to carry out the work. However, the merchant uses the Facebook group in a way that rather facilitates individual learning as acquisition. According to the Facebook data, he does not encourage the employees to post messages, to discuss the information or to contribute. Also, as mentioned earlier, the interview data indicates that the

merchant finds discussions on the group less relevant because the work routines are for the most part well known and predefined (extract 9).

7.3.2 The Facebook group as a tool for living

The interview data (extract 12 & 13) indicates that the employees find the Facebook group useful as a platform for information sharing, but they doubt the experience of learning. In other words, they do not experience information sharing as learning but they find the Facebook group useful in order to be updated at work. In line with this, the merchant clearly underlines that he applies the Facebook group for information sharing and competence development but not in relation to training (extract 1). Apparently, learning is not associated with information sharing but seems to be exclusively linked to training such as E-learning and apprenticeship learning in the supermarket. Hence, the informants seem to make a clear distinction between information sharing and the Facebook group on the one side and learning and training on the other.

Carmien and Fischer (2005) distinguish between *tools for living* and *tools for learning*. Tools for living are external artifacts that support people in carry out tasks that they could not do by themselves. Such a tool increases the person's capability within a specific task without requiring any learning, i.e. internalization of required knowledge. Tools for learning, on the other hand, support people in learning new skills with the goal that they will eventually become independent of the tool. Such tools function as scaffolding for internalization of required skills. Learning to ride a bike with training wheels can be an example of a tool for learning. In terms of these concepts, the Facebook group appears to function as a tool for living for the employees and not as a tool for learning. The employees consider the group as a tool for accessing information that might be useful in order to perform daily work tasks. This is in line with the findings reported by Mørch & Skaanes (2010) where petrol station attendants accessed information to answer difficult customer requests. Information in the supermarket about the weekly offers for instance, supports employees in customer service. The E-learning courses, on the other hand, seem to function as tools for learning. The courses are a part of the training and include specific learning objectives and content for the employees to internalize. The Facebook group is not a part of the training but rather serves as

an information base in addition to the training. Serving as a tool for living, the Facebook group might be useful for supporting work in the Supermarket.

7.4 Implications for design & further research

Considering that time and salary costs are crucial challenges for the merchant, the ideal is to let the employees carry out E-learning at home without salary. The Facebook group might function as a platform for accessing E-learning courses as well as other information.

However, the majority of the merchant's posts on the Facebook group, including the link to the Betting course, are not responded to. The group is dominated by one-way communication directed from the merchant. Despite the potential of Facebook as a Web 2.0 tool, the Facebook group rather seems to function as a Web 1.0 tool. So, how can the Facebook group be used in order to facilitate increased user activity?

In order to activate the users of the Facebook group the merchant should facilitate two-way communication and social interaction, and use the Facebook group as a Web 2.0 tool rather than a Web 1.0 tool. In that way he will facilitate sociocultural and participative learning processes in which the users have more control of the content. Higher activity and control among the employees might raise their motivation for using the Facebook group. Further, as mentioned in the discussions above, the merchant created the Facebook group and the pocket notes in order to reduce his own work. He seems to have a need to simplify his own daily working life and give more of his own work and responsibility to his employees. In practice this could mean that the employees are responsible for some of the weekly updates or other content on the Facebook group. More responsibility for the employees might raise their motivation as well as ease the merchant's workload. Another method for increasing the user activity might be the use of extrinsic rewards. In the interview (extract 1) the merchant suggested using games as a tool in the E-learning courses and using the Facebook group as a platform to share the user's results and points. This type of extrinsic reward or feedback might increase the employees' motivation for using both the Facebook group and E-learning.

Based on current research and my own study, Facebook and other Web 2.0 technologies seem to have a potential for learning at work, especially regarding situated learning (Lave &

Wenger 1991) and learning on demand (Fischer 2000). An ethnographic study of the knowledge in the world (Norman 2001) would be interesting research in the future. How do the employees in the Supermarket use the Facebook group and the pocket notes in relation to work? Do they use it as tools for living or tools for learning (Carmien & Fischer 2005)? In other words, do they internalize the knowledge and make the learning tools superfluous, or do they bring the tools to work, being constantly dependent upon them?

One suggestion is to use Facebook or other applications on the smartphone or a computer tablet as a resource for timely, updatable information at work. Another suggestion is to digitalize the pocket notes and place them on smartphones or computer tablets in similar veins. When using such portable devices, the employees are not required to internalize the knowledge because it is available in the world and ready-to-hand. A third suggestion is to use a digital learning portal integrated in the cash register, as a source to information, in the way it was done in the Norwegian project, outlined by Mørch and Skaanes (2010). This learning portal might be easily accessible and ready-to-hand for the employees working in the check out counters.

8. Conclusions

In this thesis I have explored how learning takes place in the Supermarket. Based on the pilot study of E-learning in the Company, I wanted to do an in-depth study of a Facebook group used in the Supermarket. My research questions aimed to explore how training is organized, how informal learning takes place, and how knowledge is facilitated and by what means. In order to explore these questions I conducted a virtual ethnography of the Facebook group, and qualitative interviews with the merchant and three employees. The total set of data material includes the Facebook data, the interview data and the pocket notes. The key findings and the following discussions will now be summarized based on the research questions.

8.1 Key Findings

8.1.1 How is (management initiated) training organized?

The primary training in the Supermarket includes E-learning and apprenticeship learning. The data indicates that the merchant expresses some contradicting views of E-learning. He finds E-learning useful as a training tool, but is not an active user or promoter of it. He expresses dissatisfaction with the E-learning courses provided by the Company, and finds the practice of E-learning challenging due to lack of time and high salary costs. Along with the male employee, he prefers apprenticeship learning as training method rather than E-learning. The data indicates that the E-learning courses facilitate instruction and content delivery, and can relate to Web 1.0, while Apprenticeship learning facilitates social interaction and learning by doing, and can relate to Web 2.0. Moreover, the E-learning courses involve a high degree of formal learning, while the apprenticeship learning involves a higher degree of informal learning processes.

8.1.2 How are informal (worker initiated) learning processes occurring?

Some of the informal learning processes in the Supermarket seem to occur through information sharing on the Facebook group. However, the data indicates that the group

functions as a platform for information delivery and one-way communication directed from the merchant to the employees. Hence, most of the information sharing is initiated by the merchant and not by the employees. Despite the potential of Facebook as a Web 2.0 tool in which the users are free to decide and control the content, the Facebook group mainly functions as a Web 1.0 tool in which the merchant delivers information and instructions.

8.1.3 How is knowledge facilitated and with what means?

The information on the Facebook group mainly covers work routines and grocery deals. The employees find the information useful in order to remember work tasks and face customer requests. In addition to the Facebook group, the merchant has made pocket notes in order for the employees to remember the work routines on the spot. These pocket notes might function as reminders for knowledge in the world or as scaffolding for internalizing the knowledge in the head. With the use of Facebook and pocket notes, the employees have been more independent at work according to the merchant.

The data indicates that the employees do not experience the information sharing on the Facebook group as learning. They make a clear distinction between information sharing and the Facebook group on the one side and learning and formal training on the other. The Facebook group thus functions as a tool for living, while the E-learning courses and the apprenticeship learning function as tools for learning.

8.2 Further research

Based on these findings and discussions, I have made some suggestions in order for the merchant to exploit the learning and knowledge sharing in the Supermarket. I suggest using the Facebook group as a Web 2.0 tool rather than a Web 1.0 tool. The merchant should facilitate two-way communication and provide the employees with more control and responsibility, in order to increase the user activity. More responsibility for the employees might raise their motivation as well as ease the merchant's workload.

This research indicates that Facebook and other Web 2.0 technologies have a potential for supporting learning at work. In the future it would be interesting to do a closer study of the

use of Facebook and the pocket notes in relation to learning at work in the Supermarket. I believe they have a potential for serving as tools for learning on demand. When they are placed on portable devices, such as smartphones and tablets, the information is accessible and ready-to-hand.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

Receipt from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services:

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagre gate 29
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
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nsd@nsd.uib.no
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Postboks 1092 Blindern
0317 OSLO

Vår dato: 24.04.2012

Vår ref:30207 / 3 / MSI

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 15.03.2012. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 23.04.2012. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

30207
Behandlingsansvarlig
Daglig ansvarlig
Student

E-læring og sosiale medier som metode for kompetanseutvikling i Retail-bransjen
Universitetet i Oslo, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Anders Mørch
Mari Digernes

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

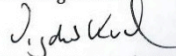
Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeplikt, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

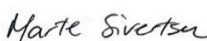
Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 01.06.2012, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen


Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim


Marte Sivertsen

Marte Sivertsen tlf: 55 58 33 48

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Kopi: Mari Digernes, Kirkeveien 98 B, 0361 OSLO

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no
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TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@svt.uit.no

Appendix 2

Screen shots from the “Introductory course”:

1)



The capital letters showed on the screen represent the Company's supermarket idea. One of the major focuses is holding the supermarket orderly and clean.

2)

The screenshot shows a digital interface for a drag-and-drop exercise. On the left, there is a 2x2 grid of four photographs showing different customer service scenarios in a grocery store. Each photo has a light blue rectangular box below it for a label. On the right, there is a text prompt in Norwegian: 'vi fire ord som beskriver hvordan vi skal yte service overfor kundene våre. Husker du hva de går ut på?' (We have four words that describe how we should provide service to our customers. Do you remember what they are?). Below the prompt is the instruction: 'Klikk på tekstboksene og dra de over til riktig bilde.' (Click on the text boxes and drag them to the correct image.). There are four text boxes with the words: 'Ja!', 'Kom!', 'Hadet!', and 'Hei!'. At the bottom of these text boxes is a button labeled 'SVAR' (Answer).

vi fire ord som beskriver hvordan vi skal yte service overfor kundene våre. Husker du hva de går ut på?

Klikk på tekstboksene og dra de over til riktig bilde.

Ja!

Kom!

Hadet!

Hei!

SVAR

This assignment, called “drag-and-drop”, involves placing the words to the correct image. The words represent guidelines for how to provide customer service.

Appendix 3

The interview guides that were used in the interviews with the merchant and three employees in the Supermarket:

Spørsmål til kjøpmann

E-læring

- Er det flere som har tatt e-læringskurs siden sist jeg intervjuet deg?
- Endret du ditt syn på e-læring på noen måte etter intervjuet med meg?

Facebook-gruppa - Mål og forventninger

- Hva var din hensikt med å opprette Facebook-gruppa?
 - Hva vil du oppnå? Hva er målet?
- Hva var dine forventninger til
 - Aktivitet og innhold?
 - Resultater og konsekvenser?
 - Forventer du at de ansatte skal lese dette i fritiden eller får de mulighet til dette på jobb?

Status quo og effekt

- Hva slags aktivitet foregår på denne Facebook-siden?
- Hvordan tar du i bruk gruppa?
 - Har du noen bevisst strategi?
 - Bruker du for eksempel noen hjelpemidler for å engasjere medlemmene?
 - Innlegg som kan skape diskusjon? Eller ren informasjon / instruksjoner?
- Skriver du ukesoppdateringer på jobb eller hjemme?
- Hvor ofte er du inne på gruppa?
- Hvordan synes du gruppa fungerer i dag?
- Har du lagt merke til om gruppa har ført til endringer i virksomheten? Prøv å sammenligne hvordan det fungerer på jobben i dag vs. før gruppen ble laget.
- Hva slags endringer?
 - Endringer på organisasjonsnivå: Omsetning, antall kunder, andre ting?
 - Endringer i butikken: Rutiner, arbeidsoppgaver, design?
 - Endringer hos de ansatte, individuelt og i fellesskap: Motivasjon, interesse, engasjement, humør, atferd, fellesskap?

Opplevelse av nytteverdi og læringseffekt

- På hvilken måte anser du denne gruppa som nyttig?
- Har du lært eller utviklet deg gjennom denne praksisen?
- Opplever du at dine ansatte synes gruppa er nyttig? På hvilken måte?
- Opplever du at dine ansatte lærer noe ved hjelp av gruppa? På hvilken måte?

Facebook og opplæring i butikk

- Tror du Facebook kan brukes som et verktøy i opplæringen av de ansatte i butikken? Hvordan da?
- Hvor relevant synes du Facebook er for medarbeidere i denne butikk-kjeden?
- Tror du Facebook kan spille en rolle i forhold til E-læring? På hvilken måte?
- Tror du Facebook kan bidra til øke brukeraktiviteten for e-læring?

Analyse av Facebook-gruppe

- Ut i fra hva jeg har observert på nettsiden, er det ikke alltid like mye respons på dine innlegg fra de ansatte. Hender det at de svarer gjennom andre kanaler, eller muntlig?
 - Eks: Tilbakemeldingsrunder. Hvor svarte de?
- Snakker dere om Facebook-gruppa på jobb? Personalmøter eller medarbeidersamtaler?
- Jeg ser at du planla å lage instruksjonsvideoer. Hvor er disse? La du de ut på Facebook?
- Ranskurs – hvor mange deltok?

Spørsmål til medarbeidere

Oppvarming

- Hvor lenge har du jobbet her / heltid eller deltid?
- Alder?
- Hva synes du om å jobbe her?

E-læring

- Hvilket / hvilke e-læringskurs har du gjennomført?
- Hva synes du om kurset / kursene?
 - Nyttig?
 - Lærerikt?
- Hvordan fikk du tilgang til kursene?
- Hva slags informasjon har du fått om e-læring?
- Anser du e-læring som et nyttig verktøy?

Facebook-gruppe

- Hva synes du om Facebook-gruppa?
- Hva slags aktivitet foregår der?
- Hvor aktiv er du?
 - Hvor ofte er du inne på siden?
 - Hjemme eller på jobb?
 - Leser du alt som står der?
 - Trykker du på linker: video, bilder, nettsider?
 - Gir du noe respons?

- Anser du denne siden som nyttig? Hvordan da?
 - Kjøpmannens ukesoppdateringer for eksempel. Leser du dem?
- Anser du denne siden som lærerik? Hvordan da?
 - Hvordan tar du i bruk kunnskapen?
- Har du lagt merke til noen endringer i butikken eller blant de ansatte siden gruppa ble opprettet?
- Tror du at siden kan føre til atferdsendring om det legges til rette for det, for eksempel rutiner?
- Hvor aktiv er du på Facebook i fritiden / privat?
- Hva slags info synes du er interessant å lese / se på?
 - Bilder
 - Ukesoppdateringer
 - Videoklipp
 - Sosiale hendelser
 - Kurs

Facebook i forbindelse med opplæring og E-læring

- Hvilken rolle tror du Facebook kan ha på jobben? Både generelt og spesifikt i butikken?
- Tror du Facebook kan brukes som en del av opplæringen i butikken?
 - Hvordan da?
- Hvor aktuelt synes du Facebook er for medarbeidere i denne butikk-kjeden?
- Tror du Facebook kan spille en rolle i forhold til E-læringskurs? På hvilken måte?
- Tror du Facebook kan spille en rolle i forhold til kunnskapsutveksling? På hvilken måte?
- Andre momenter om hvordan Facebook kan være aktuelt for medarbeidere i butikken?

Eksempel 1

Du er på personalmøte på jobben. Kjøpmannen informerer om at dere skal begynne å ta i bruk et helt nytt system i kassa som alle må lære seg.

- På hvilken måte ville du lært deg dette?

- Alt. 1: Kurs på jobben fra leverandøren
- Alt. 2: E-læringskurs
- Alt. 3: Eget kursopplegg via Facebook-gruppa

Eksempel 2

Kjøpmannen legger ut en link til et nytt e-læringskurs for alle ansatte på Facebook-gruppa. Han skriver at det handler om et nytt system i kassa som alle ansatte må lære seg. I tillegg til praktisk opplæring i kassa, oppfordrer han dere til å ta dette kurset.

- Hvor villig hadde du vært til å ta e-læringskurset?
- Hvorfor / hvorfor ikke?

Appendix 4

Screen shots of two posts from the Facebook group:

1)



2)

facebook

Search for people, places and things

Hei Folkens.

Fra og med denne uken har jeg tenkt til å benytte denne siden mer aktivt. Jeg vil fremover skrive kort hvordan det går i butikken, hva vi skal annonsere og andre ting vi skal ha fokus på fremover. Kall det gjerne en ukesoppdatering

Først og fremst vil jeg si at jeg er ferdig med telling for første halvår. Vi kom bra ut av det og klarte god lønnsomhet. For å holde lønnsomheten oppe er det noen områder som krever større fokus enn andre. Blant annet lavt svinn på frukt, brød og kjølevarer. Rutinene er på plass på og vi kan fokusere videre på andre ting. Fra 21. juni gikk prisen på bærepøser opp med 10 øre. Det er ikke mye, men det selges mange bærepøser og jo flere vi gir bort, dess mer "kaster" vi i søpla. Det selges faktisk så mange bærepøser hver eneste dag at det utgjør 1/6 av overskuddet i butikk. Gir vi bort halvparten har vi nesten gitt bort 10 % av overskuddet. Det er viktig å holde fokus på en lønnsom butikk. Allerede neste år skal butikken gjøres om, noe som koster MYE penger. Tjener vi ikke penger har vi heller ikke råd til å oppgradere butikken. Da taper vi både kunder og penger. Vi er godt i gang med ny søknad om ny innkjøring og beninpumpe på butikken. Det er under behandling i kommunen, men ser ut til å gå igjennom. Det vil da bli lettere å kjøre inn på parkeringsplassen og kanskje enda flere finner veien inn til oss.

Helgens store stunt har vært jordbær. Det har gått over alle støvelskaft. Vi har hatt all time high på salget. Vi kommer til å passere over 1000 solgte kruver torsdag til og med lørdag. Det er moro at slike tilbud slår til skikkelig. At vi får nok varer og at kundene er fornøyde med kvaliteten. Slike aktiviteter gjør at kundene blir fornøyde og kommer igjen.

Neste uke starter en ny runde av "under 100 lappen". Ny vri. Det blir et sommerlig preg på det hele. Det er 5 alternative handlelister til "alle" anledninger. "Picnic til under hundrelappen", "biltur til under 100 lappen", "tur på brygga..", "Gråværsdag" og "strandtur til under 100 lappen" Skal se om jeg greier å legge ut fila så dere får alle se hva som skjer. Hver uke fremover skal jeg også legge ut de viktigste tilbudene i frukt Det vil i uke 27 være Blåbær: 19 kr Plommer: 15 kr Hel vannmelon: 8 kr kg. NB: alle tilbud i frukt gjelder fra tirsdag til tirsdag.

Like · Comment · Follow Post · July 2, 2011 at 1:00pm

likes this.

Seen by 25

bra greitt å få med seg før uken begynner

July 3, 2011 at 8:19pm · Like

Write a comment...

Appendix 5

Two of the “pocket notes” used by the employees in the Supermarket:

1. Pocket note for the females working in the check out



1.	Vask av kasser
2.	Begynn med kassa lengst vekk, jobb deg innover. Avslutt med din egen.
3.	Begynn med å vaske alle bankterminaler, kassabånd (de sorte) og der varene legges. Bruk lite vann på skjerm og tastatur. Fei smuler og drit på bakken
4.	Hent feiekost, fei opp mellom og foran kassene.
5.	Bruk mopp til å vaske mellom kassene og foran kassene i krokene der vaskemaskinen ikke kommer til. Spesielt der kundene setter kurvene.
6.	Mopp foran og bak tippedisken.
7.	Bruk klut til å vaske bordet ved vinduet. Holdes rent. Stable blomsterpapir pent.
8.	Bruk feiebrett til å feie opp rundt blomstene og under kurvene som er plassert ved inngangen.
9.	Alt bønn som er blitt samlet opp skal ikke feies i et hjørne, men kastes i søppeldunken.
10.	Feiebrett, mopp og bøtte settes bak på lageret. Det skal ikke stå ute ved kassene.

2. Pocket note for the males working in the inventory

1.	Rydd brød, søppel (8 dunker) og flaskerom i denne rekkefølge
2.	Fyll en bærepose med søppel som ligger på parkeringsplassen
3.	Rydd vekk røde brett ved brusen, ta de med inn på flaskerommet.
4.	Sjekk ukeplan for oppgaver
5.	Er posen med plast full, tøm den
6.	Kveld. Tøm søppeldunk ved kasser og flaskeautomat slik at de er tomme på kvelden. Plukk opp korker og drit som ligger på gulvet rundt automaten.
7.	Tøm flaskerom til kvelden, ta en bærepose og ta vekk søppel som ligger på gulvet. Står ikke tomkassene på paller, hent paller. Hold det ryddig slik at det kan vaskes neste morgen.
8.	Vask flaskeautomat. Hver dag.
9.	Ta inn blomster, frukt og brød
10.	Fei opp smuler foran skapene med småbrød